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ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA

October 2001
ISSUE 49

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

NFL 2K2
Sega's Madden Killer Exclusively Revealed

PS one Crazy
The Definitive Shopping List: Nine Games You Need to Check Out

ON THE DISC

PLAY!
- Ico
- Soul Reaver 2
- Spy Hunter
- Klonoa 2
- Cool Boarders 2001
- Gauntlet: Dark Legacy
- MX 2002
- Super Bombad Racing
- Portal Runner

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Issue 49 (October 2001)

- SOCOM: Navy SEALS
- Drakan: The Ancient's Gate
- AND MUCH MORE

Devil May Cry • Grand Theft Auto 3
Maximo • SSX Tricky • Spy Hunter
TimeSplitters 2

SILENT HILL 2
The scariest game ever made
PLUS! See it on the disc

WOW!
The Stars of PlayStation for 2002 Introduced

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Obsessed With Tony's Fashion Sense? Check Out His New Line of Clothing

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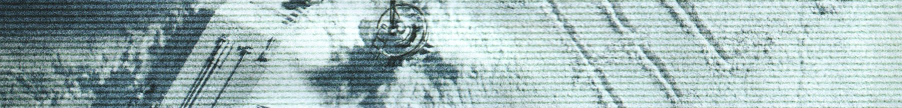

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Violence

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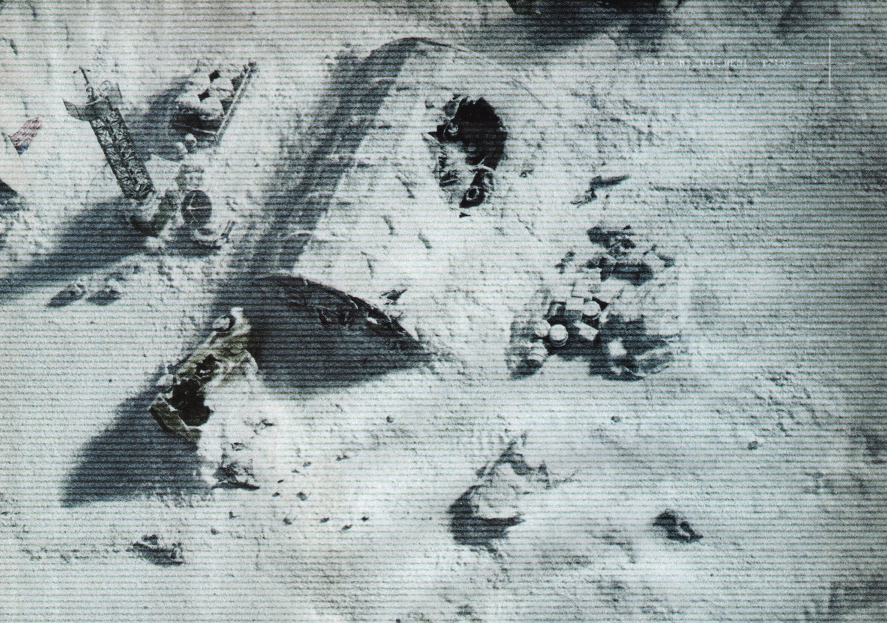

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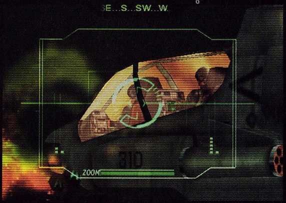
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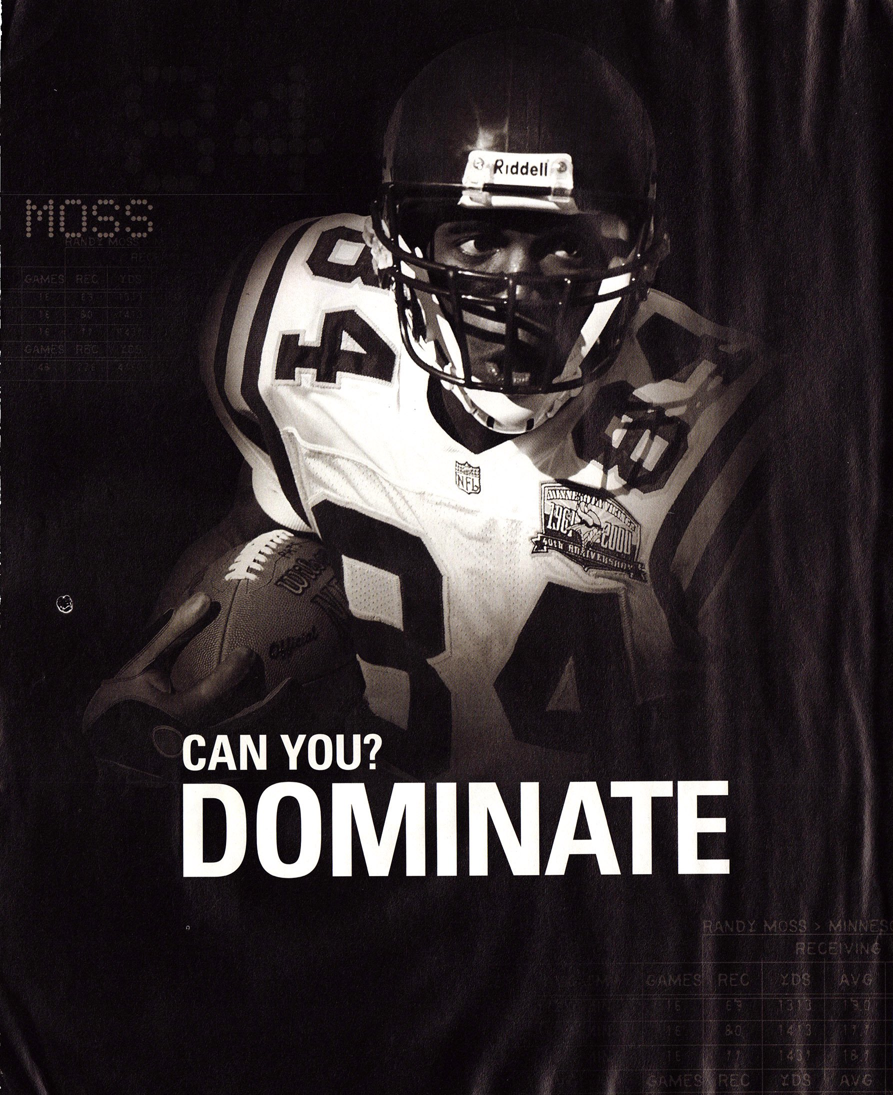
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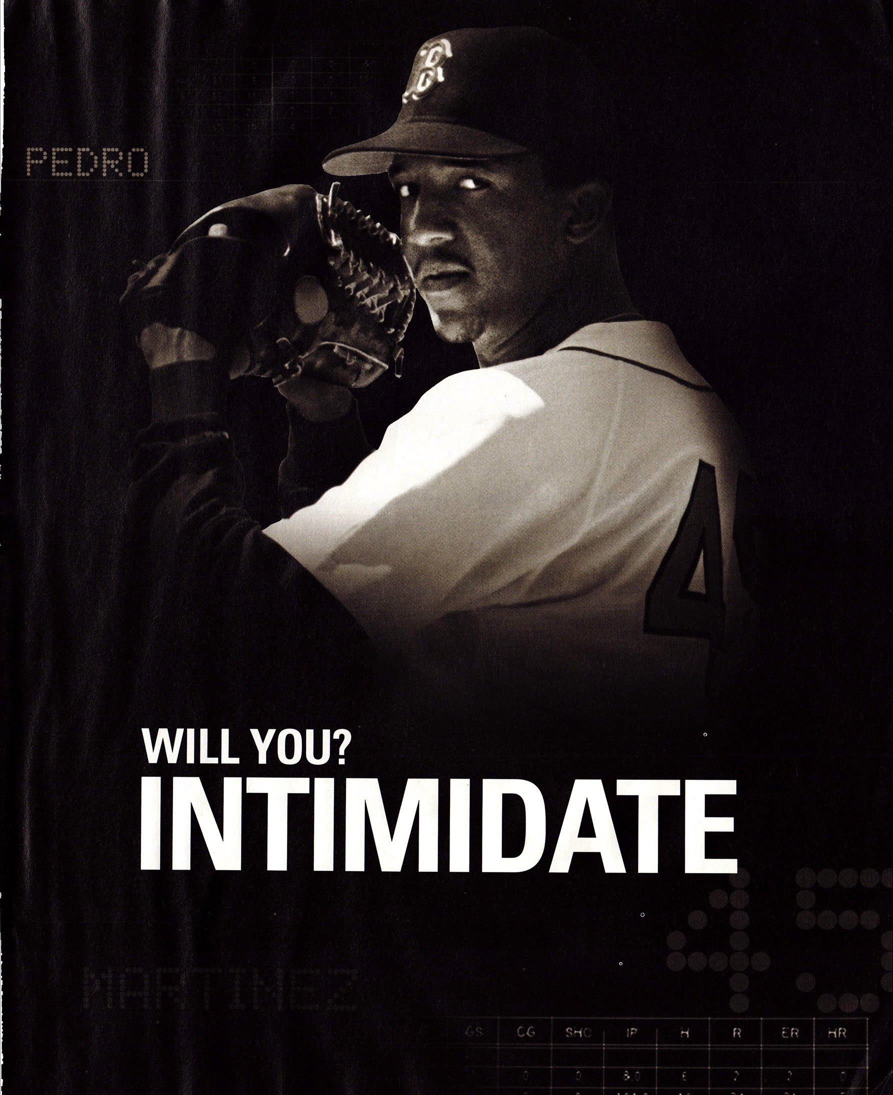
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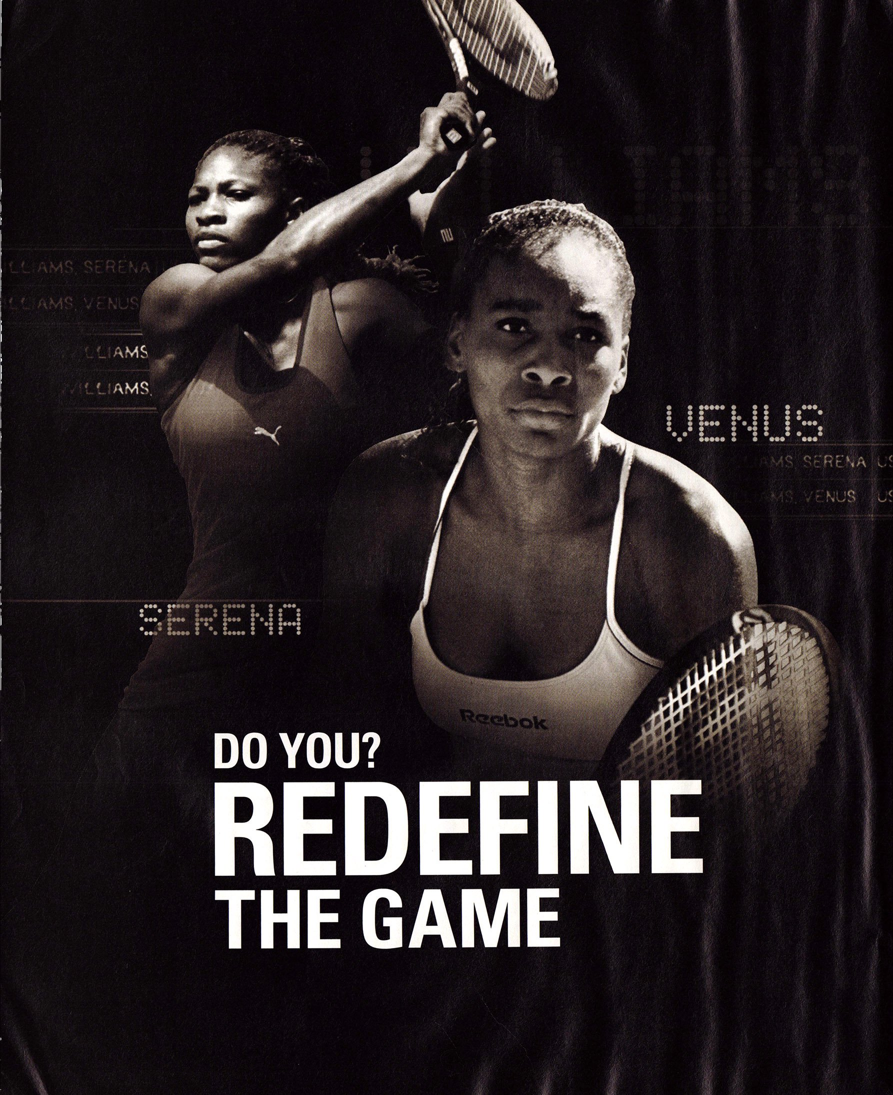
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DO YOU?
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3
SPALDING

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TAKE
CONTROL

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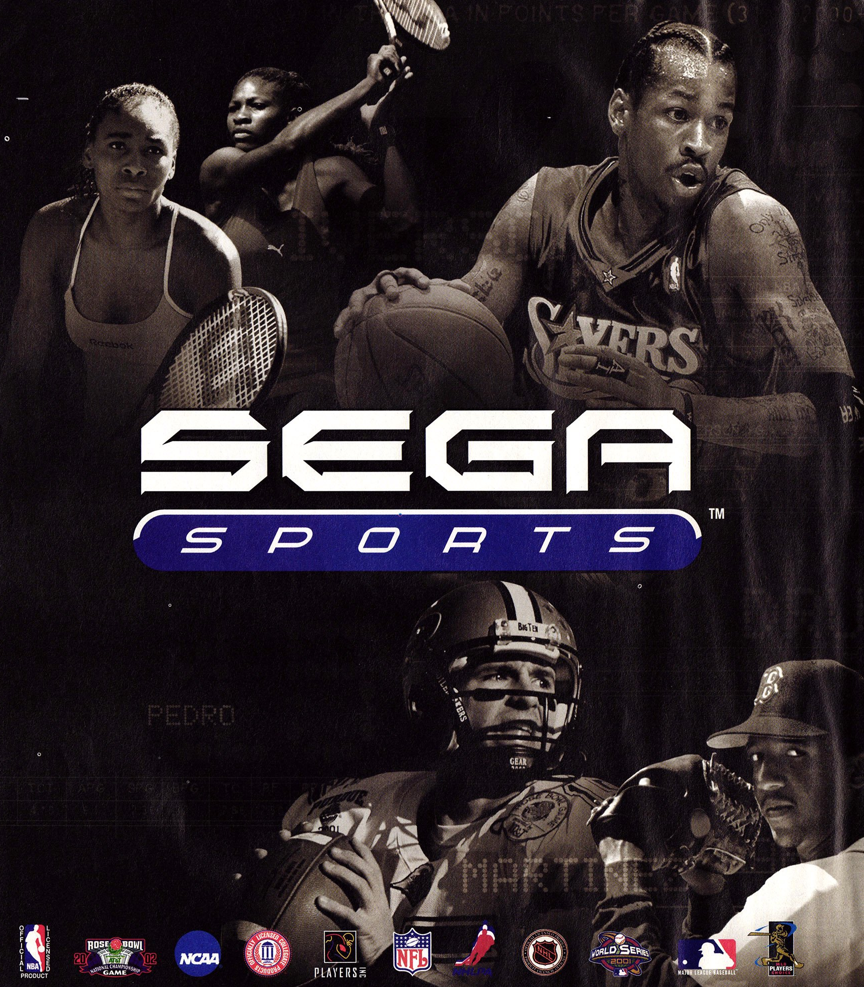
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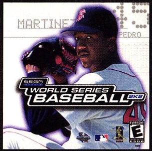
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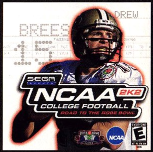
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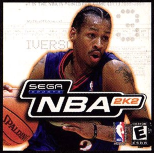
SEGA SPORTS
NCAA 2K2
COLLEGE FOOTBALL
ROAD TO THE ROSE BOWL
NCAA
EVERYONE E ESRB

MOSS
SEGA SPORTS
NFL 2K2
EVERYONE E ESRB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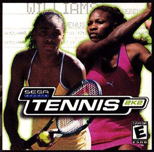
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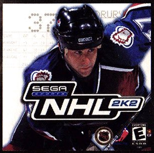
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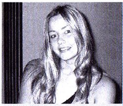
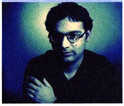
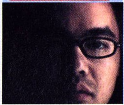


ZOE FLOWER
In addition to her monthly *OPM* column, Zoe also contributed a great writeup of Dark Summit for Previews. Formerly with Canada's *Electric Playground*, she's currently busy with new projects.
www.zoeflower.com

GARY TAXALI
He's earned all kinds of awards and recognition for his unique art style that works perfectly for our new Game Developers With Moustaches section. Take a few minutes to check out his creative work yourself at www.garytaxali.com.



SHUJI KOBAYASHI
Over the years, Shuji has photographed tons of celebrities and made them look scary—in a good way. He also does a damn fine job of making the developers of Silent Hill 2 look scary in a, well, *scary* way for our cover feature.
www.7stdesign.com/shuji



THE ONION
Arguably the greatest, most consistently funny satire of the 21st century, we can't help but laugh hysterically at *The Onion*'s hilarious stories, ranging from politics to video games, as seen on this month's P.S. page.
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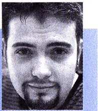
PENNY ARCADE
They make us laugh. And we're betting they'll make you laugh, too. Read the Penny Arcade guys' strip for the month, then visit their Web site for even more. And don't forget to order their new book while you're at it.
www.penny-arcade.com

JOE TORENO
You might remember Joe's photography from our Tony Hawk 2 feature back in July 2000. So who better to shoot hip dudes in hip duds from the skating legend's clothing line? He's also contributed to the likes of *Wired* and *Rolling Stone*.

Just in case you hadn't noticed yet...



John Davison
Editor in Chief

This month's issue has a PS2 demo disc bound into it. Flick through the magazine and that sort of stiff bit that makes it difficult to keep the magazine open on your lap is a *special* kind of envelope. An envelope of *mystery* and *wonder*. Inside are the first fruits of our collaboration with the *Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine*'s new partner, *PlayStation Underground*. Previously, you may be aware, the *Underground* discs were only released every three months, and you had to subscribe to get your hands on the goodies. All this has changed now. Every other month we'll be alternating between a PS2 and PS one demo disc, and we'll go out of our way to make the content on each the very best for you and your systems. We'll cram as many playable demos as we can on each disc, and supplement these with goodies that will enrich your lives and help you achieve inner peace.

No doubt you're already scrambling to put the disc in your PS2 and ignoring my ramblings. Be careful with the Ico demo—it has a spooky way of sucking you in and not letting go.

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Video Games Have Ratings, Just Like Movies

The Entertainment Software Rating Board provides information about video game content. ESRB ratings are intended as guidelines only; parents should still monitor minors' purchases.

EARLY CHILDHOOD RATING
Deemed Suitable For Children 3 Or Older. Products Carrying This Label Have Absolutely No Material That Would Be Considered Inappropriate By Parents.

EVERYONE RATING
The E Replaced The Previous K-A Rating Last Year. Suitable For Kids Ages 6 And Up, E-Rated Games May Contain Minimal Violence Or Crude Language.

TEEN RATING
Contains Suggestive Themes, Mild Or Strong Language And Animated Violence. Some Parents May Want To Supervise Children Playing T-Rated Games.

MATURE RATING
These Games Contain More Adult Themes, Such As Blood And Gore, Stronger Language And Sexual Themes. Deemed Not Suitable For Those Under 17.

ADULTS ONLY RATING
The Extreme Of The Ratings, Suitable For Adults Only. Packs Sexual Themes And Extreme Violence. Console Manufacturers Have Yet To Allow An AO-Rated Game.

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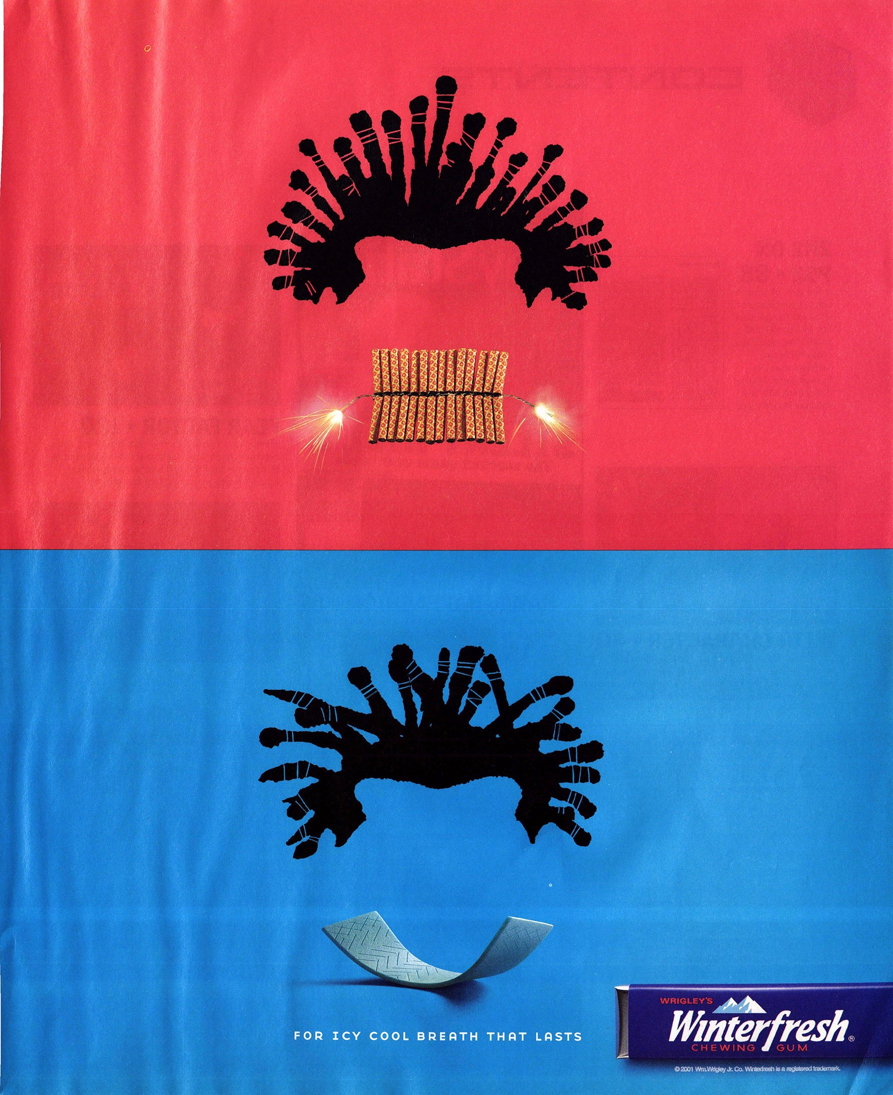
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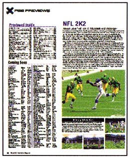
CONTENTS

2K2 ON PS2 • 88

In the spirit of competition, it's our pleasure to show you the exclusive first look at NFL 2K2 on PS2. We even had a chat with Visual Concepts about its beloved game. Find out if they think NFL 2K2 can bury Madden 2002.



PS2 PREVIEWS

Previewed Inside

Coming Soon

NFL 2K2

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October 2001
ISSUE 49

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Maximo • SSX Tricky • Spy Hunter
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Gauntlet: Dark Legacy
MX 2002
Super Bombad Racing
Portal Runner
WATCH!
Jak & Daxter
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Metal Gear Solid 2
Silent Hill 2
SOCOM: Navy SEALS
Drakan: The Ancient's Gate
AND MUCH MORE

SILENT HILL 2
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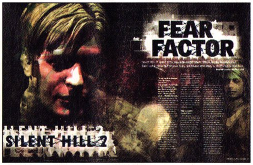
Oct. 2001

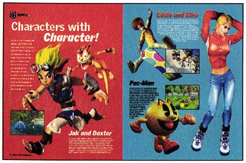


FEAR FACTOR

SILENT HILL 2

FEAR FACTOR • 120

Silent Hill 2 isn't scary. It's downright frightening. And disturbing. And brilliant. So turn out the lights and prepare to enter the PS2's first real horror experience. Actually, maybe you should keep the lights on.



Characters with Character!

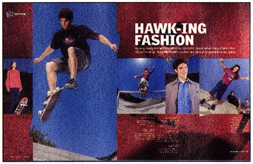
Eddie and Elise

Pac-Man

Jak and Daxter

WITH CHARACTER • 40

Graphics are all well and good, but the best part of gaming on the PS2 is the plethora of exceptionally charismatic characters. We share with you a list of the characters you won't want to live without for the next few months.



HAWK-ING FASHION

HAWK-ING FASHION • 62

You can't learn to skate like the king of skate overnight. But you can buy his clothing. Tony Hawk's clothing line is some of the freshest gear for hanging out or for ripping up a half-pipe. We'll leave the latter to you.

SPIN

34 Online at Long Last
The PS2 is finally headed online. Get all the details on the greatest thing since the PS2 launch.

IT'S A PLACE WHERE YOU ROB OLD PEOPLE, SON.

36 Calendar

38 FFX Madness
FFX is the fastest selling game in history. FFXI is going to blow you away. Ahh, RPG life is good.

40 Characters with Character
Names like Stan and Ari, Eddie and 8-Ball might not inspire you yet. But they will.

50 Only in Japan

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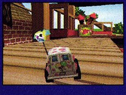
Like the Energizer Bunny, the PS one just won't die. We present the games keeping the system healthy.



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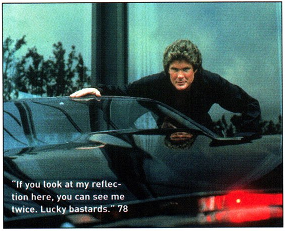
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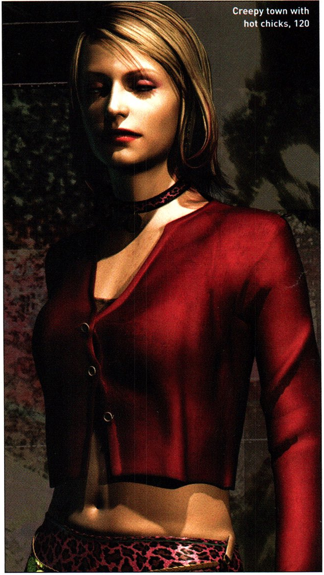
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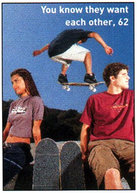
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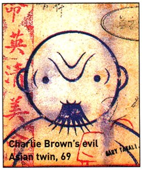

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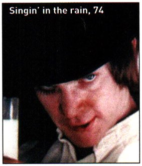
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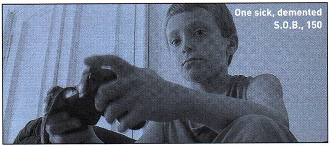
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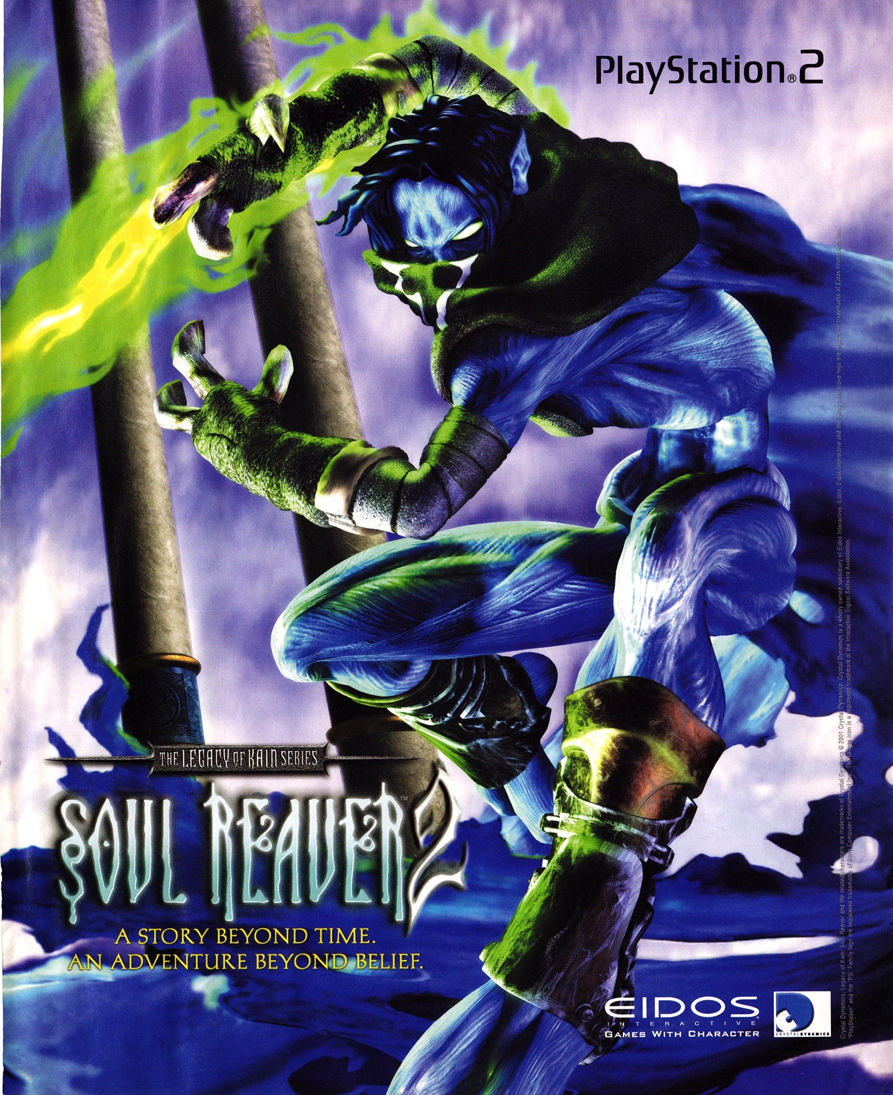
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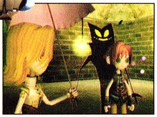
IT'S FINALLY HERE!

You've begged for it for months, and now it's finally arrived: the PS2 demo disc. But not just any demo disc. We at *OPM* have teamed with *PlayStation Underground* for the ultimate collection of, not only playable and video demos, but also behind-the-scenes info on your favorite current and upcoming PS2 games. Not to mention our exclusive interactive tour of Sony's E3 booth. You really have to see this to believe it.

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
Issue 49
PlayStation 2



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Cool Boarders 2001 • Ico • Klonoa 2: Lunatea's Veil • Gauntlet: Dark Legacy • Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing • Portal Runner • Soul Reaver 2 • MX 2002 featuring Ricky Carmichael • Spy Hunter

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DOWNLOADS

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BEHIND THE SCENES

Dark Cloud • Extermination

PlayStation UNDERGROUND

EXPLORE THE E3 SHOW FLOOR

Take a brief look at some of the hottest new games that were featured at E3 • Jak and Daxter • Kinetica • Drakan: The Ancients' Gate • SOCOM • Okage • Frequency • Ico • Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 • NBA Street • Ace Combat 4 • Devil May Cry • Silent Hill 2 • Metal Gear Solid 2

ONLINE

Get a sneak peek at the cool new tools that will help you harness the Internet and expand the playing potential of your PS2.

TOKYO STATION

Tokyo Game Show • See the fun and funky games featured this year at Japan's version of E3.

DISC PROBLEMS?

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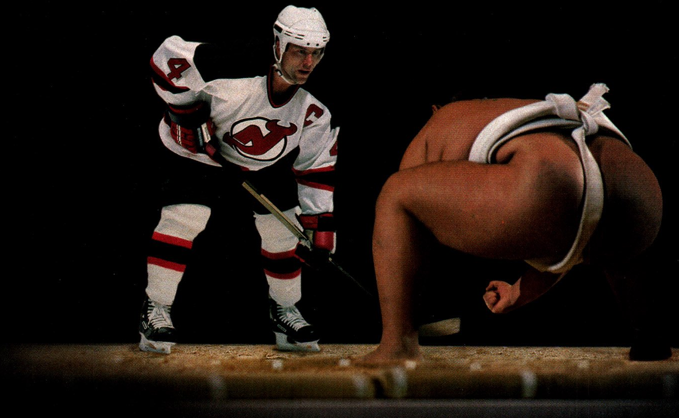

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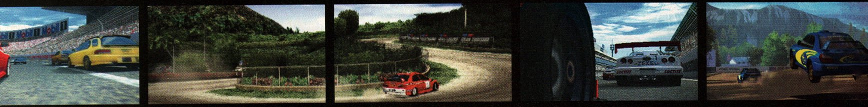
PlayStation 2
TAHITI LOOKS A LOT DIFFERENT AT 225 MPH.



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Mild Lyrics

POLYPHONY DIGITAL

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It's difficult to appreciate some of the greatest tourist destinations in the world when you're racing through them at 225 mph. But with over 30 different racecourses and cars from the world's top manufacturers which are created according to the exact specifications of their real-life counterparts, you'll feel like you could. Besides, when the competition starts battling with you for every inch of space on the track, you won't have time to see the sights. However, you can test your skills in the intense arcade mode or the simulation mode, where true car fanatics can supe-up their cars to no end. So don't worry about packing all your things, because if you're good, it'll be a short trip.

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A-spec

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Castrol
Castrol

PlayStation 2

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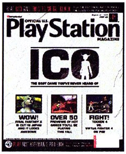
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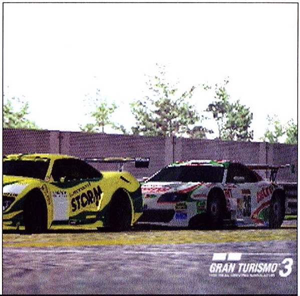
TEKKEN 4 VS. VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 ON PS2



Think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your video game expositions and you could win the official *OPM* Box of Joy. We pack our Box of Joy with an assortment of nifty goodies from all your favorite software companies.

The Reality of Ratings

I wanted to share with you something simply hilarious. It's about that company called 3DO. Having played some of their games, I'm not really a fan and don't see any value about them. But me and a friend (who loves your magazine equally as well) decided to average out the final scores of all your reviews for 3DO games. Just for curiosity. Well, to no one's surprise, the average came out to a whopping 2.2. Can you believe that?! 2.2!! I have just three words for 3DO: Make better games. And please, STOP MAKING ARMY MEN GAMES!!

What's also strange is that Squaresoft's average came to 3.8. That's not bad, but I expected it to be significantly higher. Konami, which has made two of my favorites (Castlevania SOTN and Metal Gear Solid), had an embarrassing average of 3.1, which goes to show that Konami either makes excellent games or terrible games.

SCEA got an average of 3.5, and so did Capcom. If Capcom didn't have the fabulous Resident Evil franchise, then they would most likely have a bad rating. And SCEA has the Gran Turismo games to keep it afloat, so that most likely kept it going strong.

In short, what I am saying is that all video game publishers are capable of being superb, but they simply have to make good games! If hell freezes over and 3DO actually makes a game that doesn't suck, then they all need to be good and they will do fine. If all of Konami's games were as good as Castlevania and Metal Gear Solid, and less like Poy Poy, then it would have an excellent average!

I hope you post this in your magazine so I can share my discovery with other readers. What I'm trying to say is that people need to make better games to be the best of the best.

Chris Currey
localmotionmaui@hotmail.com

For every Final Fantasy, there's Legend of Mana. For every Gran Turismo, there's Jersey Devil. For every Army Men game, there's...uh, yet another Army Men game. Still you make a great point: every publisher—including fanboy favorites like Square, Capcom and Konami—has put out both good and bad titles. Well said, Chris. And thanks for doing all that math for us.

Letter of the month

I hate you.

You never warned me about that damned Gran Turismo 3: A-spec that hit the world with huge chaos in Japan and certainly in the U.S.

Fine, you did tell me about its superior graphics and awesome physics, but when I bought it and threw it into my PlayStation 2, I was caught totally unprepared. The opening video hit a big 10 on my cool scale, with its combination of replay footage, CG graphics and live action.

Then the game started...

My first experience behind the wheel of a GT3 car was in a silver RUF 3400S on the oval track during a Free Run in Arcade Mode. Nothing too hard for the first time. Immediately the raw power of the PS2's abilities hit me. Everything was perfect right down to the last detail. It brought a tear to my eye, seeing all this perfection.

But the damage wasn't finished.

After a few laps, I quit my one-man race and decided to try another car. Then the replay started. From this view, I was able to see the perfection in the car, right down to the glowing brake pads and heat ripples coming off the tarmac. Even the camera's actions added to this beautiful scene: Before GT3, the camera was always precisely centered on the car and had a very computer-controlled look to it. But now, it appears that there is a human camera operator trying to keep up with the car as it speeds around the corners. All the minute movements and camera shakes made the experience all the more enjoyable.

I was now laughing in hysteria, amazed at this level of detail.

And still, the damage is left unfinished.

Feeling like I could take anyone on at this point, I tried a race on Hard (thinking that it would be the same as in GT2—child's play for me).

I couldn't be more wrong in my life. The advanced A.I. easily took me out of commission. (It might not have helped that they have emotions now, since I'm used to just slamming into them like in GT2. Note to gamers everywhere: Do not piss these guys off!!)

So, you can now see why I'm really mad at you: Even with all your warnings of the perfect graphics and such, I was still caught totally unprepared for the onslaught of Gran Turismo 3, and am now having serious withdrawals every time I'm away from the game for more than 30 seconds.

Jason Rosvick
millennium47@hotmail.com

Dark Cloud Debate

In issue 48 you printed a letter by a reader who remembered playing a game similar to Dark Cloud but he couldn't remember the name of it. It sounds to me like he's talking about Soul Blazer, a game released for the SNES back in 1992. In this game you restored towns and villages by clearing out monster lairs. For each lair you cleared out you would bring back a building or sometimes a person who lived in the village. The gameplay was very similar to that of Zelda, with the same overhead view. Oddly enough, your character could also communicate with plants.

Adam Robertson
adamr@daktel.com

We got a few letters "correcting" us on this one. While we thought last month's letter was referring to Enix's ActRaiser, which is often cited as a major influence on Dark Cloud's gameplay, that reader might have actually been thinking of Enix's Soul Blazer. Either way, here's a lovely screen from that SNES classic for all you longtime gamers to get misty-eyed about.

Breathe Some Life Into PS one

I'm a faithful reader of your mag and I love video games, but something has been bugging me. Its seems that (as much as I hate to say this) the PS one is dying. All the developers (Squaresoft, Capcom, Namco, etc.) have been moving on to other platforms for their new games—and it's not fair. I bought a PS one because it had some awesome games. But now that the developers are moving to different platforms, they're forgetting about the PS one. So, please, all you game developers out there—don't forget about PlayStation...please.

Patrick Walsh
ANTcwboy@aol.com

Dying? Maybe. But far from dead. Check out our chart previewing some of the bigger PS one releases in this month's Spin section. And if you're a newer PS one owner (which it sounds like you are), think about using our handy Review Archive to mine the massive PS one library for some good values. Or just buy a PS2 already!

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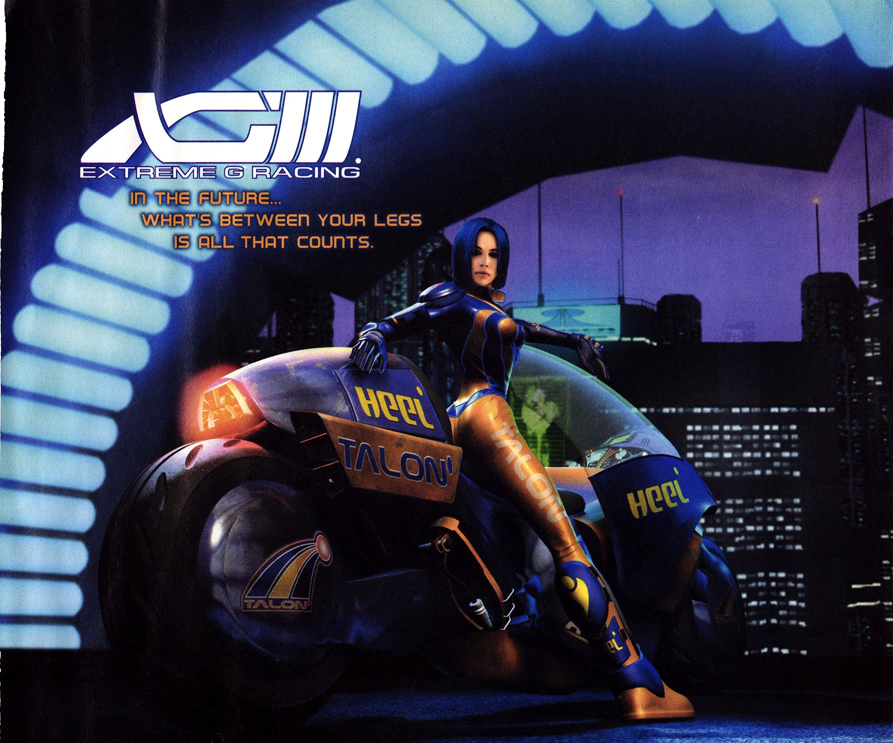
XGIII
EXTREME G RACING
IN THE FUTURE...
WHAT'S BETWEEN YOUR LEGS
IS ALL THAT COUNTS.
HEEL
TALON
TALON
HEEL

Your pulse quickens. Your stomach drops. You feel it in your toes. With an intense 60+ FPS frame rate and speeds over 750 mph, XG3 is super-charged, gravity-defying combat motorcycle racing that will blow your mind. Get it before your parents make you sit down and talk about it.

best
STORM
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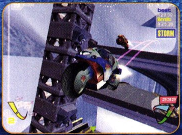
12 different super-charged bikes packing serious firepower


best
STORM
232

9 incredible racing circuits with gut-wrenching loops, twists, spirals & drops

best
STORM
440

Futuristic, interactive racing environments: city, desert, arctic, ocean & canyon

EVERYONE
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PlayStation®2

In-game music by
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"When I look into the mirror, I see myself. I see Lara, too. I'm not saying I look exactly like her. We resemble each other a little, but not much. I see the Lara Croft inside me."

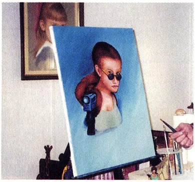
Creepy Lara Letters

This picture (below) shows the true-life portrait of the real Lara Croft as she would be in the mind of an artist who is also an avid player of the games.

Our disappointment runs deep in giving up the forward evolution of the only realistic exotic adventure game in existence today.

Our circle of players has decided to relive the playing of past games in the Lara series. New games are presently showing no evidence of the continuation of realistic exotic adventures. An entire avenue of gaming has been placed in jeopardy by many negative factors. Many of these negative factors have been falsely guided by editors who do not seem to understand that all major avenues of gaming need to be supported or a balanced evolution of games will never take place.

"Friends of Lara Croft" (aka Mike Wolfe)
Murchison, Texas



I am writing in reply to your PlayStation Underground Online Poll for the month of August, issue 48, page 62. It was titled as follows: "Who Would You Most Like to Trade Places With for a Day?" Thirty-seven percent said "Lara Croft." I don't have any problems with that. The thing is, I don't need any changes to be her. When I look into the mirror, I see myself. I see Lara, too. I'm not saying I look exactly like her. We resemble each other a little, but not much. I see the Lara Croft inside me. I'm as adventurous as she is. My friends see me as a young Lara.

I have no desire to go around raiding tombs. I want to lead a perfectly normal life, but this is a big obstacle. I know I can conquer it. There is nothing I can't.

I love playing Tomb Raider and don't want to give it up. Can you give me some suggestions on how to defeat this giant monster at the end of my game?

"Gesellda"
venomgirl523@excite.com

NATHANIEL NUZZO'S MOST WANTED

1. **Final Fantasy X**
2. **Silent Hill 2**
3. **Legend of Legaia 2**
4. **Grand Theft Auto III**
5. **Xenosaga**
6. **Blood Omen 2**
7. **PaRappa the Rapper 2**
8. **Soul Reaver 2**
9. **A PS2 port of Dance Dance Revolution!**
10. **SOCOM Navy Seals**

E-mail your most wanted list to **OPM@ziffdavis.com** Mark the subject MOST WANTED.

QUICK HITS

FORESIGHT

Here's my request: Show me the strategy to beat FFX. I want to get prepared.

Gerald Howard
huacofrog @earthlink.net

We're a bit too busy working on the FFXI strategy to help you right now. Sorry.

STICK TRICK

I was wondering what that second analog stick is for? Is it even used in any games? Let me know. Thanks.

Tevmagic @aol.com

Pop FFVII into your PlayStation, twirl the right stick three times clockwise, once counterclockwise, push it in, and twirl it once again clockwise...and you'll be able to revive Aeris!

NICE TRY

I was wondering if you still had that job where you send us a game and we try it out and give you our opinion. If you do, I was hoping that you could tell me how to get that job.

Mat Curtin
scorpion388 @juno.com

That would be our jobs. And, no, you can't have them.

Gameplay Will Get Better

I just wanted to comment on Ryan Lockhart's column about lack of gameplay (*OPM* 47). I agree that a lot of games these days are focusing on the cinematic power of the PS2, and not the gameplay itself. When I first purchased my PS2, I was a little worried about the extremely short play time most of the games had. Shadow of Destiny had amazing graphics and cutscenes, it had a promising and intriguing storyline, but it took all of five hours to complete. I was a little worried after playing Onimusha—until I bought SSX and saw what fun could be had with the PS2.

Even though I complain about the lack of gameplay, every time I pop in a new game with those amazing graphics and cinematics, it still amazes me. I'll purchase games with great cutscenes even if I know the game is pretty short, and I think the game companies know this. But I don't think this trend will continue on forever. Game developers are just beginning to play with their new toy. Once they get all of the "look what I can do" out of their systems, they'll begin to steer back toward gameplay. And I'm excited to see how this amazing processing power can be used to create longer, more challenging games.

Chris McVey
McVeywithfries@aol.com

"Who" Cares?

I am a huge fan of the *Doctor Who* television series. Do you have any information at all on the series being transformed into a video game, preferably on the PS2?

Troy Evans
Wichita, Kan.

Sorry, Troy, but it's not likely to happen. The PS2 couldn't possibly handle *Doctor Who*. It would take far too many polygons to render something that stupid.

THE SOAP BOX

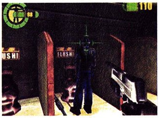
I was looking at your last issue and was bothered by something. It was what Hironobu Sakaguchi said: "The spirit of Final Fantasy games has always been to outdo ourselves every time we make a new title..." No offense, Mr. Sakaguchi, but that sounds like a large load of crap. If this were true, wouldn't they have already fixed the things everyone complains about, such as random battles and the boring summoning videos? Sure, every Final Fantasy game makes an attempt at something new, but always seems to fail to make something spectacular. I like the Final Fantasy series, but it feels like they're starting to just crank out the games and not truly work on them. The storylines feel a little reused and the characters are getting old—they need something fresh. How about a story about one of the teammate-style characters where you follow and help the hero and view someone else's perspective of what's going on? Well, the guys down at Squaresoft would probably never go for something like that, but at least I get to say what's on my mind.

Lloyd Campbell
Romanenko@ffonline.zzn.com

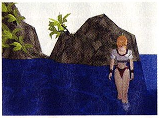
Got something you want to rant about? Get on our soap box and vent. E-mail us at OPM@ziffdavis.com and mark the subject line SOAPBOX.

Screen Caption Contest

Every month we run a pic, and it's your job to come up with a witty caption. E-mail your captions to **OPM@ziffdavis.com** and mark the subject **CAPTION CONTEST**. The new picture, from Ephemeral Fantasia, should be easy enough.



WINNER!
Despite the stringent rules governing restroom usage, Microsoft isn't a bad place to work.
Turner Luesing, Roswell, Ga.



CAPTION THIS
Think of something that'll make us chortle 'til we choke and you could be a winner.

Official Contest and Sweepstakes Rules

OPM CAPTION CONTEST Official Contest Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send an original caption for the designated screen shot on a standard-sized postcard containing your name, address, and phone number to "OPM Caption Sweepstakes" PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff Davis Media Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive one (1) video game or one (1) video game-related item as determined by Ziff Davis Media Inc. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $20-50. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by OPM editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Ziff Davis Media Inc. should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Ziff Davis Media Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Quote Contest Winners List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

OPM LETTER OF THE MONTH Official Contest Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard-size postcard containing your name, address, and phone number together with your comments to "OPM Letter of the Month", PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff Davis Media Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive a box containing various items from the OPM offices. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of at least $10. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by OPM editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Ziff Davis Media Inc. should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither Ziff Davis Media Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Letter of the Month Winners List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

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"No wonder you don't like [Spec Ops], since you represent big-money special interests who have lost touch with the average consumer."

Melodrama!

Last month we asked you to tell us your feelings about too much melodrama in RPGs like Final Fantasy. Here's what you had to say:

Melodrama can be great as long as it's executed in the correct way. Chrono Cross is a prime example. That was a perfect game with perfect melodrama. It lacked all the cheesy moments, yet still packed a punch as far as emotions go. Kudos to Chrono Cross and all its makers; they have made an addict out of me.
"Katie"
tigress4627@hotmail.com

I have mixed feelings about melodrama. In FFVII, the melodrama makes for very lifelike characters and a very deep story. But it also gets annoying. I can remember being up in the wee hours of the night, tired, ready to save my game, when Cloud has one of his stupid flashbacks. I just figured that it would last a second or two, BUT NO. It just has to take forever, droning on and on about Cloud's misfortune! What I am trying to say is that melodrama isn't a toy, and in the right hands it can make one hell of a game.
Adam Mann
killerbee125@hotmail.com

Yes, there's a lot of melodrama in the games, but it doesn't bother me much. I do think they could do something different to make it less melodramatic. They could put you in the position of the villain and your goal is to kill the hero and rule the world. Now that would be a fun twist.
Hank Nichols
hdnichols@home.com

Music Generators

My friend and I invented one of the weirdest jobs on Earth: making music CDs for those who use any of the MTV Music Generator games for PlayStation and PS2. Here in Drummondville, Canada, that thing grew big—way beyond our expectations.

We started this business last year. I had a project studio to record my rap band and, Matthieu Gauthier, my associate, was an MTV Music Generator freak. We were seeking a way to record Matthieu's songs without losing sound quality. At the beginning, we recorded in analog, and the results weren't convincing. My studio got bigger and my associate got a PS2, which opened the door to digital-recording technologies.

So here we are, a year later, a couple of albums produced for local MTVMG 1 and 2 users. Of course, these albums weren't sold anywhere; they were produced as the artists' personal backups. We decided to take this a step further—to offer this service everywhere in North America. The process is simple. Send us:

- Your PS one or PS2 memory card containing MTVMG 1 or 2 files.
- A brief description of your work (track names and order)
- A $35 (U.S.) check plus shipping and handling (the fee varies depending on how you want us to ship your CDs and cards)
- Your complete name and address (if you want everything back)

Note: A CD is 74 minutes maximum. We make special deals if you want multiple copies of your CDs.

If any of you are interested in our work, please contact us at mefisto@infoteck.dr.qc.ca, or at the address below.

Guy Daudelin
Huit Clos Studio
750 L.O. Taillon #109
Drummondville, Quebec, Canada
J2C 6H2
(819) 478-7068

Very cool. We can't vouch for Guy's services, as we haven't tried him out ourselves, so order at your own risk. But Guy did send us a CD of his buddy Matthieu's tunes, which were quite solid. This is exactly the kind of thing that Sony hoped to generate with the advent of the PS2. And it's further proof that gaming is truly crossing over into other forms of pop-culture entertainment.

Spec Ops Defender

You made your point that you don't like $9.99 Special Ops games. No wonder you don't like them, since you represent big-money special interests who have lost touch with the average consumer. Low cost and effective—I realize these are terms Sony is not familiar with. Maybe we can buy your company presidents a dictionary for Christmas. Lighten up and represent the average consumer for a change. Sorry to throw mud on your ivory tower, but Special Ops is a fun game, at a great price.
Joshua Mathias
Redmars@webtv.net

Sounds like Josh has been listening to a little too much Rage Against the Machine. Easy, Tiger. Take a few deep breaths. Put in some Neil Diamond or something. The world is not really out to get you.

QUICK HITS

SAD SACK
My family and I live in a small rural community. I dislike it here because everyone still believes it is politically incorrect to play video games when you're a girl. Despite my accursed name, I am a boy. I don't think I could be with a non-gamer. All you female game lovers, I can easily compare myself to Squall. Send your name and picture.

P.S.: Who am I kidding? My face looks like a Dreamcast controller.
Shannon Cromer
Yoakum, Texas

WHY BOTHER?
I'm looking for cheat codes for the Grinch game and GameShark codes for it also.
Pete James
sylvester1@telusmail.net

Our best trick for the Grinch: Don't even play it.

HELP
ルール－はオーバードライブタイプ【憤怒】をおぼえた！
ワッカ HP 1218 MP 50
ルールー HP 819 MP 192
ユウナ HP 476 MP 104

QUESTION OF THE MOMENT

In honor of our collaboration with *PlayStation Underground* to produce our first PS2 demo disc, we asked you what kind of content you'd like to see on future discs. Next month, tell us whether it bothers you that so many of this holiday's big releases are M-rated games. E-mail us at OPM@ziffdavis.com. Mark your notes MATURE.

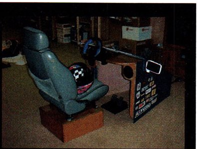
I'd like to see the MGS2 demo, the E3 2001 MGS2 trailer, a Batman Vengeance demo, a Blood Omen 2 demo, and maybe the Final Fantasy X demo if you can.
Robert Sautter
North Webster, Ind.

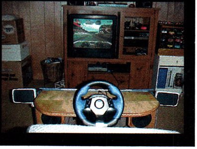
I've already completed 75.8 percent of GT3, but it would still be awesome to have a download of full completion and all cars. Also, a "behind the scenes" or "the making of" GT3 wouldn't hurt!
Russell Fuller
rf2196@juno.com

I think I speak for everyone when I say that I want a Final Fantasy X demo, whether it be playable or just a video. You can do it!
Brandon Coots
meskaroni@hotmail.com

Riding in Style

Did I go too far? This is what happens when you wait nine months for a game to be released. Over the last nine months I was thinking of a way to make a comfortable chair to spend lots of time in while playing GT3, and I thought what would be better than an actual car seat. Originally that was all this was going to be, but one thing led to another and this is what I came up with. The seat is from a junkyard. I don't know what kind of car it came out of, but with a little elbow grease I was able to clean it up. It's mounted on a wood box built out of 2x8's and birch plywood. The main body is built out of lauan plywood, 2x2's, and birch plywood for the front console and table. The setup is actually more than a driver's seat—it's also a sound system. There's a 10" subwoofer under the seat (which gives ripple strips and rally racing a new feeling); there are two 4" midrange speakers in the counsel; and the mirrors house the two 3.5" tweeters. The steering wheel is the Logitech GT Force wheel. The whole thing took about three days to build and has really made this game a lot more fun to play. I just thought other GT geeks like myself might enjoy this. It was the helmet, wasn't it? That's where I went overboard, right?
Mike Tooman
miket@sunrisebuilders.com





PS UNDERGROUND ONLINE POLL

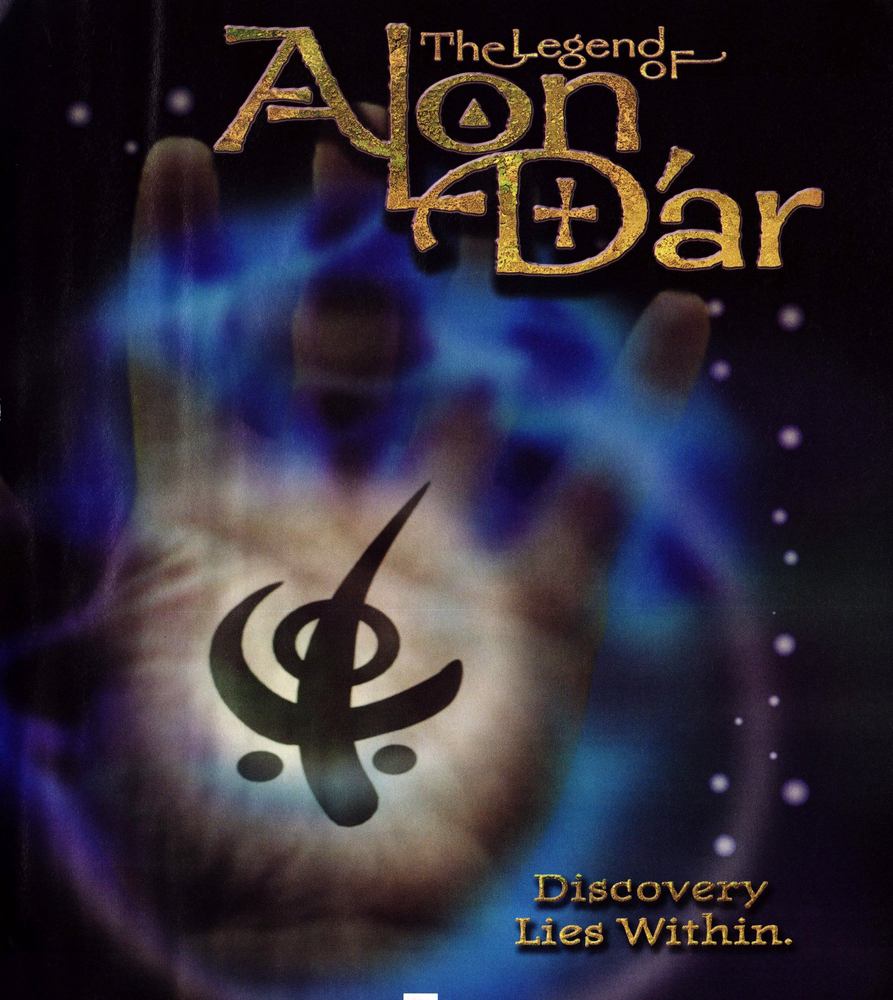
Do you actually like talking to other gamers?

Yeah, to compare notes and get specific info.

No way. They're just trying to mess with my head.

It is when I am most at peace with the world.

The Legend of Alon D'ar



TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Violence

PlayStation®2

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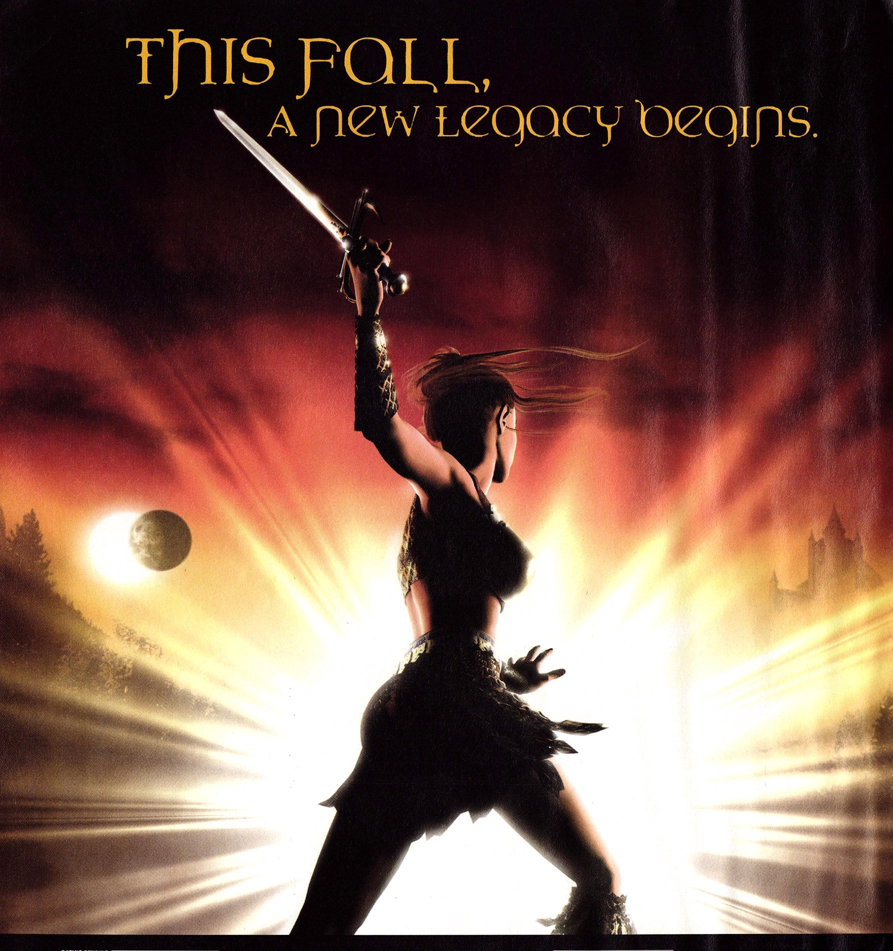

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PlayStation®2

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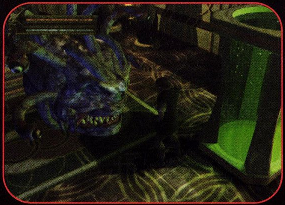
THROUGH COUNTLESS
OPPOSITION



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–*cloudchaser.com*

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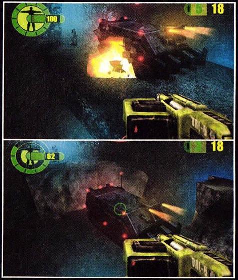
"THE FUTURE OF FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER GAMES IS SITTING ON STORE SHELVES IN A PACKAGE MARKED RED FACTION!"

—Associated Press

GEO-MOD™ TECHNOLOGY

For the first time ever destroy and alter the environment in real-time! GEO-MOD technology revolutionizes first person shooters by opening up a whole new level of strategy:



Don't fight the convoy…just destroy the bridge.

"THE NEXT STEP IN THE EVOLUTION OF VIDEOGAMES!"

—Game Pro Magazine

"IT'S GAMES LIKE THIS YOU BOUGHT A PLAYSTATION2 FOR!"

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

"RED FACTION IS ONE GAME THAT EVERY PLAYSTATION2 OWNER SHOULD OWN!"

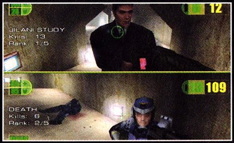
—New York Daily News

THE VEHICLES

Hijack 5 fully armed land, sea and air vehicles.

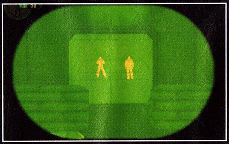
MULTIPLAYER

Wage war in 2 player split screen death match!



YOUR ARSENAL

Unleash 15 weapons of mass destruction.



Use infra-red weapons to blast enemies through walls!

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence
Blood and Gore

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INSIDE SPIN

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Final Fantasy XI
Details and screens for the first-ever online Final Fantasy. Huzzah!

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Characters with Character
Who are Stan and Ari? Jak and Daxter? Eddie and Elise? We introduce you to the characters you'll be spending all your time with.

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Only in Japan
We go hands-on with Ka, the mosquito simulator (really!) from Sony Japan

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The PS one games you must have for this holiday season.

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Who we'd like to see in the Crazy Taxi movie.

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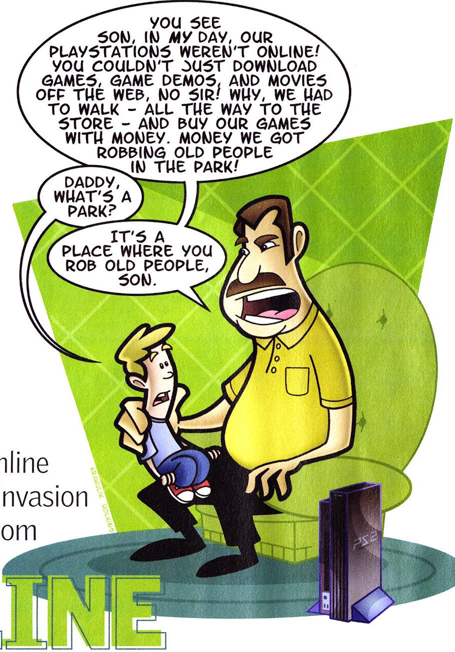

YOU SEE SON, IN MY DAY, OUR PLAYSTATIONS WEREN'T ONLINE! YOU COULDN'T JUST DOWNLOAD GAMES, GAME DEMOS, AND MOVIES OFF THE WEB, NO SIR! WHY, WE HAD TO WALK - ALL THE WAY TO THE STORE - AND BUY OUR GAMES WITH MONEY. MONEY WE GOT ROBBING OLD PEOPLE IN THE PARK!
DADDY, WHAT'S A PARK?
IT'S A PLACE WHERE YOU ROB OLD PEOPLE, SON.
KRAHULIK HOLKINS
PS2

Get ready for online gaming's great invasion of your living room

ONLINE INCOMING!

Yeah, we've all heard that online is supposedly the greatest thing that will happen to video gaming. And yeah, we've all seen the headlines touting that Sony has massive online plans for the PS2. But honestly, do you really know what online gaming is all about? Or care?

Well, starting this November Sony is going to take its first baby steps into what will no doubt become a massive effort to get its users online. And you should care about that, because not only will it change the way you play—it'll change the way you live.

Perhaps the best way to capture this point would be to borrow that tagline from the AT&T commercials a few years back that boldly stated, "You will." Because with the advent of broadband online on the PS2, *you will* be doing all of these things that in the past you've only dreamed of. *You will* be using your game console to chat and send e-mails. *You will* be watching streaming video off of the Web. *You will* be playing your favorite fighting or sports games against folks in China.

Yes, you'll be doing all that—and a whole lot more. No longer will you be begging your girlfriend, kid brother or dog to play games against you. Instead, you'll be e-mailing your newfound friends in Swaziland to see if they're up for a rematch of last night's massive upset in Madden NFL. And no longer will you have to drive down to the local EB to pick up that hot new game you've been waiting months to get your hands on. Instead, you'll be able to simply download it off the Web and be up and playing within a matter of minutes. Online really will change the way you live, and Sony is ready to kick it all off this November.

Unfortunately, what we'll actually see in November is only a hint of what's to come. But what a hint it will be! Bringing two of the most popular franchises in gaming, Twisted Metal and Tony Hawk, to the online world is a terrific way to start things off. And with a Netscape Web browser and Instant Messaging right from the get-go, PS2 online is ready to launch!

TONY HAWK 3

Publisher: Activision
Release: November

Possibly one of the most ambitious online titles early on, the next Tony Hawk will allow you to skate with a bunch of friends in the same park. You can do tricks together, chat or push them over if they piss you off. Fun, huh?

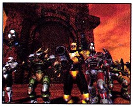
SOCOM: NAVY SEALS

Publisher: SCEA
Release: November

Designed primarily as a team-based combat game, SOCOM will be a classic "good guys vs. bad guys" combat game in which teams of Navy SEALs go in to take out the terrorists. You'll be able to play as either side online.

TRIBES 2

Publisher: Activision
Release: January 2002



Another team-based action game, and something that's proven very popular (the Penny Arcade guys love it). If you've ever played paintball, the missions are very similar. Only the weaponry here is a little more brutal and futuristic.

FREQUENCY

Publisher: SCEA
Release: November

Everyone seems to have a hard time comprehending Frequency's gameplay, but it's really quite simple. Online, instead of singlehandedly chaining sounds together, you share the burden with other people as the tunes develop.

TWISTED METAL ONLINE

Publisher: SCEA
Release: November

Already boasting some damn fine multiplayer options, the online version of Black will basically take the same maps and modes and enable you to play them against others online. No more crowded little windows on the screen.

FINAL FANTASY XI

Publisher: Square
Release: Spring 2003

Square's first-ever online game is outlined elsewhere this month. Certainly one of the most eagerly anticipated multiplayer games for PS2, FFXI appears to share a lot in common with Sega's popular Phantasy Star Online.

You've Got Mail...*On* PS2!

This November, when you pick up your Network Adapter and Hard Drive, you'll be able to use all of the functions of the popular AOL service on your PS2 (but don't worry if you'd rather use your own ISP to connect to the Web—that's fine, too). Chat, e-mail and Instant Messaging will all be available to you instantly (the software should come preinstalled). You'll be able to customize the program to suit your particular tastes. Heck, you can even change the "You've got mail!" voice to one of your favorite celebs, like Madonna, Jackie Chan or the Destiny's Child girls!

The Complete Setup

We've been getting lots of questions about the pricing of the PS2 online components, but Sony still hasn't officially announced anything besides the Network Adapter ($40). We're guessing the Hard Drive will cost about $150, and the mouse and keyboard should fall into the $25 range. As for the LCD monitor, we won't even hazard a guess.

PS UNDERGROUND SPECIAL FEATURE

New PS2 Online Info

In addition to showing video clips and special interviews with the developers of some of the new online PS2 games (such as Tony Hawk 3 and SOCOM: Navy Seals), this month's demo disc also contains new info on the broadband capabilities of the PS2. In an interview with Sony's Masayoshi Tanaka, *PS Underground* learned of the future possibilities of watching High Definition TV (HDTV) quality video on the PS2. Users will be able to download full-size movies off the Internet using their broadband connections and then store them on the 40 gigabyte Hard Drive. Just imagine the future: Renting a video from Blockbuster will be as easy as clicking onto their Web site!

BROADBAND ON PS2
Masayoshi Tanaka
SCEI

OVERHEARD

Jim Spellman/WireImage.com

"The PS2 is sweet...I'm excited about playing over the Net. If they make an Olympic game it will be awesome to actually play against someone in China. Too much fun."

—*Saturday Night Live*'s Jimmy Fallon shares his PS2 online gaming strategy

PS2 ONLINE FAQ

Q: Will I need a broadband connection to go online with the PS2?
A: Nope. The PS2's Network Adapter contains both a broadband connection and a standard 56k modem for regular phone line dial-up.

Q: Will I be able to use my current Internet Service Provider (ISP) to go online with the PS2, or will I have to switch to AOL?
A: You'll be able to use any current ISP that you have.

Q: Do I *have* to purchase all the peripherals, like the monitor, keyboard and mouse, so that I can go online?
A: No. In order to go online, all you'll need is the Network Adapter.

Q: Will I be able to download content off the Internet onto my PS2?
A: Using the Network Adapter in conjunction with the Hard Drive will allow you to download music, movies and eventually games.

Q: Will I have to worry about computer viruses attacking my PS2 if I go online?
A: Sony hasn't yet announced virus software for the PS2, but rest assured that it will be available when the Network Adapter ships.

Q: If I get the Hard Drive for online stuff, will I also be able to use it to save games? Like a giant memory card?
A: Nope. The Hard Drive is used only for game and media-related files.

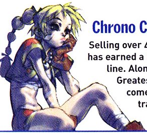
Q: Will I be able to play online against people who own the same game but on a different system? Like, for example, Half-Life?
A: If the software supports it, then it's possible.

Q: Will I be able to e-mail game save files?
A: Yep.

Q: Will there be a version of Instant Messenger for the PS2?
A: Yes. It comes as part of the PS2 AOL software.

Q: How will the browser look on a TV? I'm sure it looks great on that funky hi-res flat-screen monitor, but surely it won't be the same on my Wega.
A: Specifics haven't been announced yet, but we have it on good authority that the browser will run in a lower resolution on TVs in order to facilitate easier navigation. Think: WebTV, only about a zillion times cooler.

Q: Will I be able to, say, check out the Tenacious D video by Spumco? And also, how about, y'know, the naughty stuff?
A: The Tenacious D video is presented in Flash, something that will be a part of the PS2 browser. "Specialized interest" Internet content comes in a variety of formats. The pictures you'll be fine with. For videos, it has to be in a supported format. Considering that Real Player plays a wide variety of video formats, including the popular proprietary .ram, mpegs and .avi's, you'll be OK with some stuff. For QuickTime and Windows Media Player files, we'll have to wait until Real Player is able to support these formats (unlikely) or versions of these players are made available as plug-ins for the PS2 browser (much more likely).

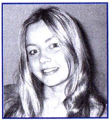


Chrono Cross a Greatest Hit

Selling over 400,000 copies, Chrono Cross has earned a spot in Sony's Greatest Hits line. Along with the reduced price, the Greatest Hits version of the game comes with a bonus: English-translated lyrics of the ending theme song in the manual.

ZOE FLOWER

BLIND FRIGHT AND A NIGHT-LIGHT



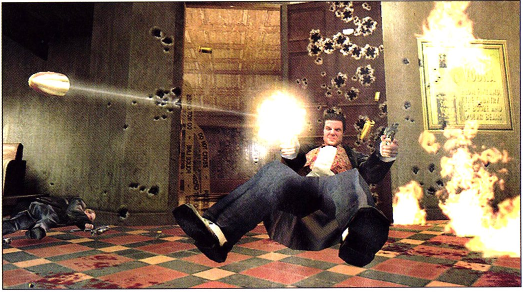
If anyone shouldn't play horror games, it's me. I'm the girl in the theater during scary parts of movies who has her knees pulled in, building a fortress out of popcorn boxes, with just a microscopic crack of light pouring in to ensure I am sufficiently traumatized by what I see. As a teenager, slumber parties were committed to with much anxiety, knowing a stack of slasher flicks would be lined up for the evening's entertainment. This would usually be followed by scary stories told under the blankets with a flashlight. Often there would also be someone hiding in the basement to run out and scare the living daylights out of you so badly that you would have to sleep with a night-light for the better part of your adolescence.

Movies weren't the only thing to scare me senseless. The first video game that left my palms clammy and cold was Escape from Castle Wolfenstein. Despite the primitive pixel landscape, I was deathly afraid of the German guards (seven or so white pixels) who would demand your identification and, if you didn't bribe them or show them some ID, would shoot you on the spot. The experience was rare at that time, and it wasn't until Capcom delivered Resident Evil that I recall the true pulse of fear pumping in my veins again. Resident Evil capitalized on the "make you jump" factor, forcing you into a state of fear as you wondered what would burst out around the next corner.

When Silent Hill crept into town, I wasn't counting on being scared. In fact, the first few minutes with the game made me wonder if it wasn't just a boring walk around a foggy little village. But after 15 minutes, I was hiding deep under a feather duvet, with just enough air trickling in to breathe, only one eye on the screen, fighting to keep my controller from shaking. Nothing had jumped out. Nothing had snuck up on me. But the eerie atmosphere was too much, and I had to turn off the game and put on a Disney cartoon to calm down. It was just plain haunting with its ambient silence, radio static and twisted story. Whereas Resident Evil wasn't scary once the game was put away, Silent Hill clung to me in the dark, heralded nightmares and almost blinded me (trying to keep an eye open in the shower with soap streaming into my eyeballs on a daily basis).

With Silent Hill 2 creeping up, I feel the familiar heebie-jeebies kicking in. While the new visuals are unnervingly grotesque, the secret to Silent Hill's success is in what you can't see—the claustrophobic camera, the unsettling noises, the desaturated landscape, and the pallid, vaporous cinematics that seethe with sinister intent, echoing a bizarre story you wouldn't want to hear, even under a blanket with a flashlight. If the Silent Hill team sticks to its original fear-inducing devices, using and not abusing the graphical powerhouse that is the PS2, Silent Hill's sequel will be infinitely scarier than the original. In that case, I need to stock up on night-lights.

Zoe Flower is no longer gracing Canadian TV screens and is instead pursuing new interests in order to establish herself as a multimedia superstar. Check out her stuff at www.zoeflower.com.



HOLLYWOOD GAMES

More gaming icons are set to jump to the silver screen

With their massive crossover appeal, as demonstrated by this summer's smash *Tomb Raider*, video gaming's iconic characters and franchises are looked upon as gold mines by many of Hollywood's heavyweights. By now you've likely heard that *Resident Evil*, starring Milla Jovovich, will be hitting theaters next summer. Or that Tristar has been working on a movie based on the popular first-person shooter series Doom. Or even more recently, that Richard Donner (*Lethal Weapon* series) is currently putting together a movie based on Sega's Crazy Taxi. But beyond that, deals are currently being made to bring a whole bunch of other popular gaming characters to the big screen.

Leading the pack is the new badass of the games industry, Max Payne, who has just landed himself a movie contract. According to his creators, this was the plan all along. "Everything was tailored for Max to hit the big time," 3D Realms' Scott Miller told the *Hollywood Reporter*. "Most developers and game publishers don't put a strong focus on characters like they should, but we took a different tack with Max." And Max isn't the only badboy cashing checks. Everyone's favorite trash-talker, Duke Nukem, has his own movie in the works, and it's being helmed by *Mortal Kombat* producer Larry Kasanoff. According to reports, The Rock is said to be playing the part of Duke.

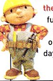
We've also recently learned that Shadowman, the game and comic book property from Acclaim, is being adapted into a movie, which could be ready by late next year. Ice Cube has been pinpointed as one of the leads.

Even the legendary Solid Snake is currently talking shop in Hollywood, with a movie deal likely to be signed in the next few months. Series creator Hideo Kojima recently admitted that a movie is likely, although he himself would not direct it. "I have no problem with Hollywood doing a Metal Gear movie in the Hollywood way," he told us. "For me to do a Metal Gear movie, though, I'd be a hypocrite, since I feel the best medium for Metal Gear is a game." As for who he'd personally love to see direct the Metal Gear movie, Kojima quickly responded: "the Wachowski brothers" (*The Matrix*).

The list of games turning into movies grows larger every few months now, and things don't seem to be slowing down. No doubt many of these movies will be stinkers, but we're betting that at least a few will really rock.

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

4 TUESDAY
- Time Crisis: Project Titan, Capcom vs. SNK 2 (PS2) and One Piece Mansion (PS one) released, proving that both systems can have a good day.



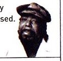
5 WEDNESDAY
- NASCAR Thunder 2002, Nicktoons Racing and Bob the Builder fuel a particularly PS one-centric day.

7 FRIDAY
- Lotus Challenge arrives in stores for PS2.

9 SUNDAY
- PlayStation U.S. release date (1995). So now it's six.
- Adam Sandler (1966) is older than you think he is. Today is his 35th birthday.

10 MONDAY
- Ryan Phillipe (1975) wakes up on the morning of his 26th birthday next to legally blonde wife, Reece Witherspoon.

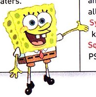
12 WEDNESDAY
- Sex-machine Barry White (1944) turns 57 on the same day that Okage: Shadow King is finally released.



14 FRIDAY
- Rockstar, featuring young Mark Wahlberg, is in theaters along with Novocaine, which features Kevin Bacon, Helena Bonham Carter and Steve Martin.

18 TUESDAY
- Silent Scope 2, NHL 2002 (PS2), Dance Dance Disney Mix, Spider-Man 2 and X-Men 2 (PS one) arrive on the 40th birthday of *Soprano* James Gandolfini.

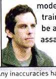
21 FRIDAY
- Omar Epps and Tim Allen vehicle Big Trouble hits theaters.



25 TUESDAY
- Silent Hill 2, Spy Hunter, F1 2002, NHL Hitz 2002, Ico and Soul Reaver 2 all hit PS2, plus Syphon Filter 3 and kid fave Spongebob Squarepants for PS one.

26 WEDNESDAY
- Sega's much-anticipated NFL 2K2 joins NASCAR Thunder 2002 in stores on the same day people rush out for Scooby-Doo for PS one.
- Enterprise airs at 8 p.m. on UPN.

28 THURSDAY
- Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson star in Zoolander, a movie about a fashion model trained to be an assassin.



All dates are correct as of press time. Any inaccuracies have nothing to do with us, although we're pretty certain the birthdays are correct.

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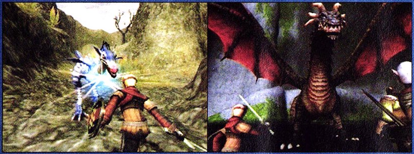
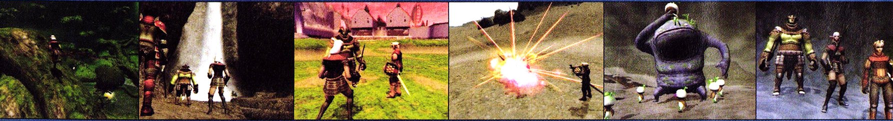
heal...

FUTURE FANTASY

Square unveils its first foray into the world of online games



Even though Final Fantasy X has yet to be released here in the U.S., Square has already begun showing off Final Fantasy XI to gamers in Japan. The first-ever online Final Fantasy, not to mention the first-ever online game from Square, FFXI marks a drastic change for the series.



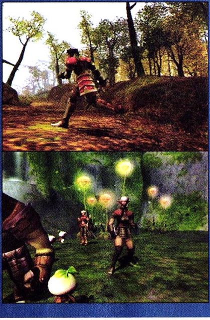
No longer are gamers supposed to play on their own. Instead, Square wants to get users of all sorts online and interacting with each other. Taking on a particularly tough boss? Get your friends to pitch in and help you destroy it. Don't have enough money to buy the weaponry you need? Simply send an instant message to a buddy asking if you can borrow some cash. Square is putting together a massive virtual world with its PlayOnline network, one in which all sorts of interaction will be possible. But the best part is that you'll be able to play Final Fantasy XI with people from all over the globe.

As can be seen in these screenshots from an early version of the game, FFXI marks a return to the more medieval style and settings prominent in the earlier Final Fantasies. Knights are clad in rather simplistic armor and weaponry, and there's an abundance of dragons to do battle with. But while character designer Tetsuya Nomura (FFVII, VIII and X) is involved, the characters look quite different than those found in his previous games.

In addition to being overseen by series creator Hironobu Sakaguchi, Final Fantasy XI is being directed by Kouichi Ishi, known for Legend of Mana, and Hiromichi Tanaka, of Chrono Cross fame. Having those two involved will certainly give the game a fresh new style and approach.

Square clearly has high hopes for Final Fantasy XI; the company expects to eventually have 1 million active players in Japan alone. According to Square, it will need 300,000 subscribers in order to break even on the server costs. By the time you read this, Square should already be beta testing the game with select players in Japan, and by this December a full-blown public test of FFXI is said to happen there. Then in March 2002, the game will see a full release in Japan.

As for the U.S. market, FFXI isn't likely to make it here until the spring of 2003. But if Square can manage to come through with all of its planned features for the game, it'll be well worth the wait!



Final Fantasy X Releases in Japan

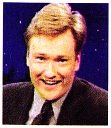
FINAL FANTAS
ファイナルファ

Nobuo Uematsu and Rikki field questions at the FFX launch event

Every launch of a Final Fantasy game is a big deal in Japan, and this latest release, the first for the PS2, was no different. Massive numbers of eager gamers lined up to buy the game on the first day of its release, but there were thankfully no shortages. Square shipped 2,140,000 units to stores, of which 90 percent (1,926,000 copies) were sold through in just four days. By comparison, that's almost as many copies that Final Fantasy IX has sold in total in Japan.

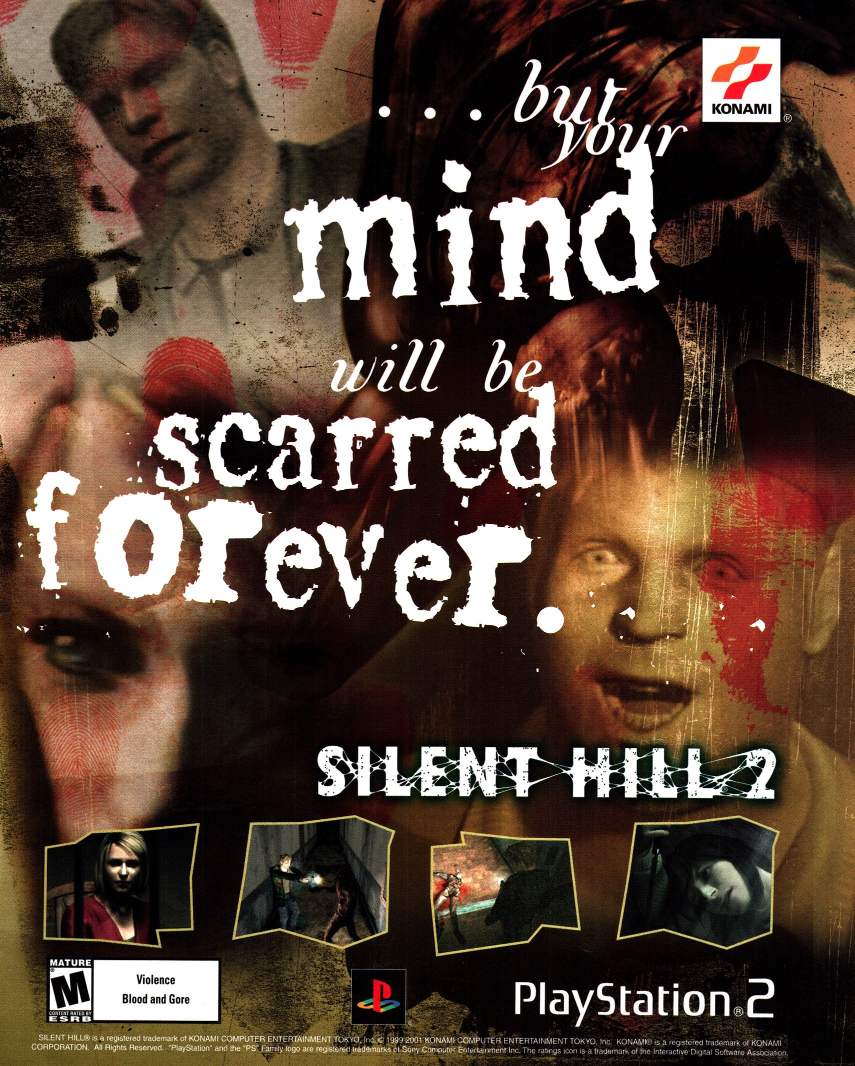
On the launch day, Square held a special event to promote the game's soundtrack at the Tower Records in Shinjuku, Tokyo. On hand were composer Nobuo Uematsu and theme-song vocalist Rikki, who even gave a live performance.

OVERHEARD



"*Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* before its release : there are no people in the movie :: *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* after its release : there are no people in the theater."

—Conan O'Brien takes a jab at the poorly received *Final Fantasy* movie in an SAT analogy bit.


KONAMI
. . . but your
mind
will be
scarred
forever.
SILENT HILL 2
MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence
Blood and Gore
PlayStation 2

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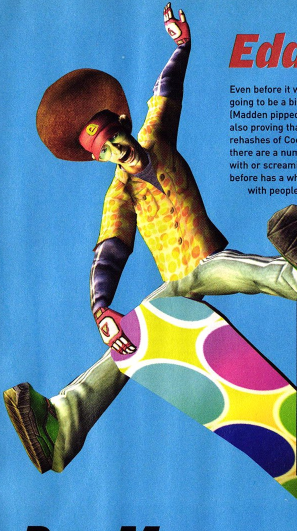
Characters with *Character!*

So...who will you be spending the holidays with? At some point, you're going to have to stop playing Gran Turismo 3 and check out something else. To help you along, we thought we'd introduce you to the characters you should be snuggling up with come this fall and beyond. Some may be familiar to you already, but all of them are virtually guaranteed to star in the blockbusters on both PS one and PS2 over the next six months or so.

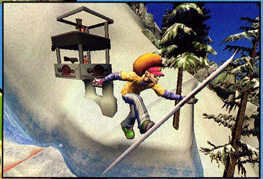
Jak and Daxter

No one can deny that Naughty Dog has a certain knack for producing games with a broad appeal, and for developing characters that capture the hearts and minds of millions. Jak and Daxter the game is a development of the design ethos that made the Crash Bandicoot titles so widely appealing. Jak and Daxter the characters are somewhat unique in that they have been designed to appeal to the broadest possible audience. They don't look too Japanese, they don't look too Western. Will this "manufactured" approach work as the gaming equivalent of a preened and pretty boy band? Early indications seem positive, and the characters certainly look set to be the sure-thing hit this Christmas.



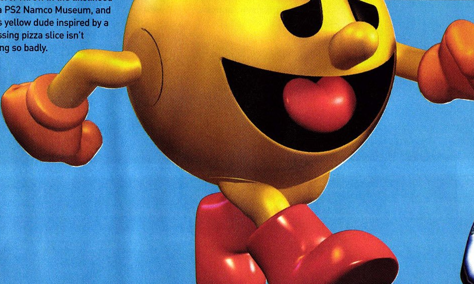
Eddie and Elise

Even before it was out, the vibe around the original SSX was that it was going to be a big hit. Although not the No. 1 game when the PS2 launched (Madden pipped it to the post), it helped broaden the appeal of the PS2, also proving that all snowboarding games don't have to be boring rehashes of Cool Boarders 2. With Tricky set to hit stores in November, there are a number of characters whom you'll either be aligning yourself with or screaming at, but the coolest of the bunch has to be Eddie. Never before has a white boy with a 'fro exuded such cool. And he's such a hit with people who have seen him that he will no doubt become a staple of both the SSX series and the EA Sports Big brand. Then, of course, there's Elise who's definitely SSXy enough for the boys, but sassy enough for the girls.

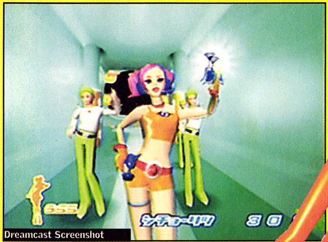


Pac-Man

He may not be the force in gaming he was 20 years ago, but you'd still be hard-pressed to find a video game character more recognizable than Pac-Man. And we're about to see a lot more of gaming's original icon in the coming months. First off, Pac-Man World 2 continues the dot-gobbler's platforming exploits, moving him from the 2.5D world of the original to a 3D one. Namco also has plans for a party game tentatively titled Pac-Man Fever, where fellow Namco all-stars from the likes of Soul Calibur and Tekken join him in minigames galore. Throw in the likelihood of a PS2 Namco Museum, and this yellow dude inspired by a missing pizza slice isn't doing so badly.



Characters with *Character!*



Dreamcast Screenshot

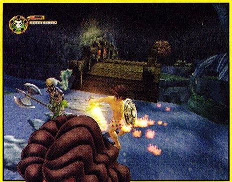
Ulala

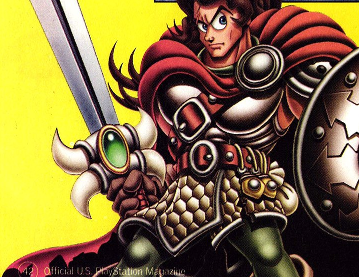
In the fall of 2000, it was hard to miss Sega's pink-haired heroine Ulala, as the company flooded TV and magazines with hype for Space Channel 5 on Dreamcast. She even played a major role on last year's MTV Video Music Awards, presenting the award for Best Dance Video. Too bad so few people actually purchased her game. Things might change soon, though, when Space Channel 5 hits the PS2 to a much larger audience.

So what's her deal? As a 22-year-old broadcast journalist at the end of the 25th century, Ulala is the only remaining reporter at Space Channel 5 to cover the invasion of Morolians, an alien race that gets its kicks by turning innocent Earthlings into mindless go-go dancers. Only Ulala's dancing skills (i.e., your rhythm on the control pad) can save us all from such a horrible, horrible fate.

Maximo

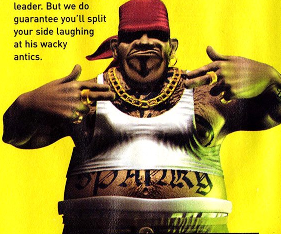
Back in the 8- and 16-bit days, Capcom's rise to power was aided greatly by the success of its Ghosts 'N Goblins series. Gamers both thrilled and laughed to the adventures of Sir Arthur, who, on his quest to free his woman from the undead, was known to fight in his boxers if his armor gave way. Enter Maximo, a similar young knight on a similar quest full of similar monsters and, well, similar boxers. Granted, the game that bears this new hero's name isn't directly related to the established series of yesteryear—but it's still a blast.





8-Ball

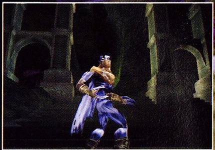
The video game industry takes heat from all kinds of groups. But now the near-midget, chunky, gold-chain, midriff-showing set can finally stop lobbying for representation. It seems as if 8-Ball from Rockstar's sure-to-endure-a-frivolous-scourge-of-controversy State of Emergency is going to shoulder the burden of representing that under-appreciated chunk of the population. There's little chance you'll be moved to riot the local Starbucks after spending the day vandalizing on your PS2 with this riot leader. But we do guarantee you'll split your side laughing at his wacky antics.

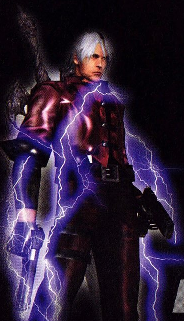


RICKY**CARMICHAEL**
CONGRATULATIONS ON HIS 2001 250cc *SUPERCROSS* CHAMPIONSHIP.
ONE 250cc SUPERCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP DOWN, ONE (TWO, THREE, FOUR...) **TO GO.**
CARL HYNDMAN PHOTOS.
MODEL FEATURED, THE **TITAN.**
DCSHOECO
DCSHOECOUSA
VAILABLE AT YOUR
OCAL SKATEBOARD SHOP.
FIND A LOCATION NEAR YOU, SEE THE LATEST NEWS,
AM INFORMATION AND SHOES, VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT
WW.DCSHOECOUSA.COM

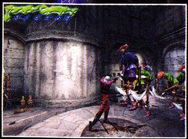
Raziel and Kain

The bad boys of the holiday season exude attitude and interesting orthodontics. Kain himself is probably the nastiest hombre you'll find yourself playing as this year, his violent exploits in Blood Omen 2 bordering on the ridiculous. He also has a major role in Soul Reaver 2, where he hams it up as a power-mad Machiavellian vampire overlord. Raziel, of course, continues to be the ultimate hero for people who listened to the Sisters of Mercy in their heyday. But as the Soul Reaver story brings his tale to an end, could this be the last time we see him?



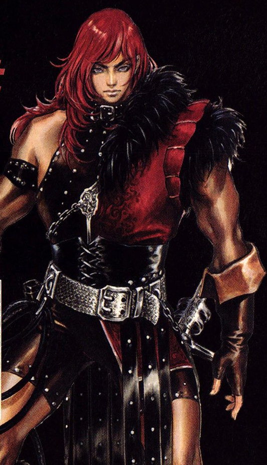


Dante

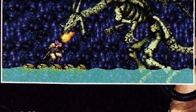


As the star of Devil May Cry, Shinji Mikami and Capcom's newest hero, Dante, is in for one hell of an inferno this December. Throughout his incessant battles against merciless droves of puppet-like demons, Dante must also battle the demons within his soul—the ones that, incidentally, occasionally allow him to morph into an almost unstoppable fighting machine. Throw in that kick-ass dual-gun/sword combo, and Dante could be the coolest new game character in years.

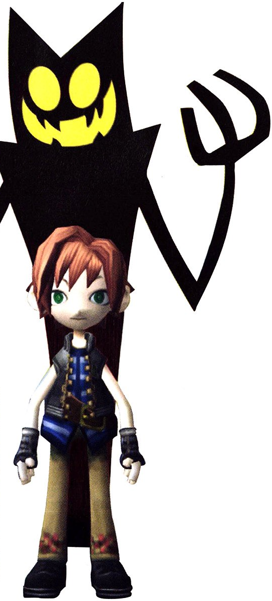
Simon Belmont



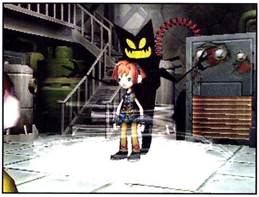
Simon's been around fighting Dracula since the late '80s, but don't think that he's gotten sour. Over the years, he's sported all sorts of outfits (such as a bright blue piece in Castlevania 2) and a variety of hair colors (blond, brown, black). But in his latest adventure, Castlevania Chronicles for PS one, Simon's dressed to kill with a tight-fitting brown garment and red-hot hair.

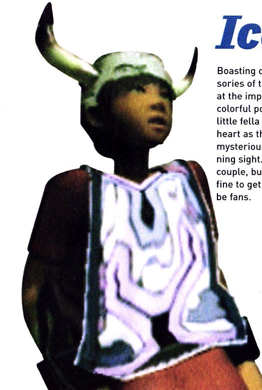


Stan and Ari



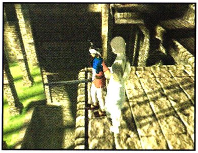
It's a match made in heaven...er, make that hell. Ari is an arrogant whippersnapper more concerned with chasing the local skirts than obeying the commands of his evil, eternal overlord. Stan is, well, a devil—but, alas, no one seems to believe his claim that he's in fact the king of all demons. Since Stan has been trapped in a bottle for far too long, he's lost much of his power and now needs Ari to reclaim his rightful position. Together, they embark on a quest full of bitterness, banter and bedlam. Along with the unique style of all of Okage's characters, the game features a lighthearted comedic approach that helps separate it from all those too-serious RPGs out there. Equally pathetic and sympathetic, Stan and Ari have the makings of one of the more unique duos to grace the PS2.





Ico

Boasting one of the most unique fashion accessories of the season is young Ico. Just take a look at the impressive breadth of those horns—and that colorful poncho. Sure, he's only 10, but this horny little fella is prepared to sneak his way into your heart as the star of his eponymous game. With the mysterious Yorda at his side, the two make a stunning sight. Sure, they may not be the most talkative couple, but we're fairly certain they'll manage just fine to get their point across to a legion of soon-to-be fans.



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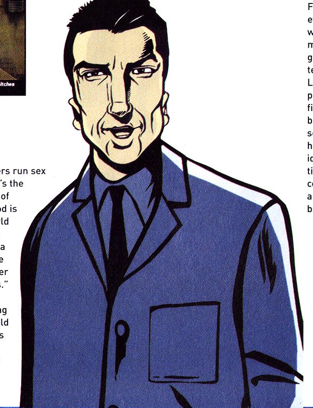
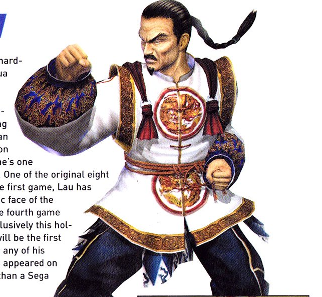
Some Diablo skumball has been pimping his skuzzy bitches in my backyard.

Luigi



How many video game characters run sex clubs? As far as we know, Luigi's the first. Voiced by Joey Pantoliano of *Sopranos* fame, Luigi's livelihood is just a slim taste of the real-world severity in Grand Theft Auto III. He has you pick up hookers for a policemen's ball, then later take a bat to the head of a drug dealer who's selling drugs to his "girls." GTA3 plays like a gangster film feels, and Luigi's on the low rung of the mob ladder. This title could very well change the way games are made. That's why we can't wait to feature it next month on our cover.

Lau



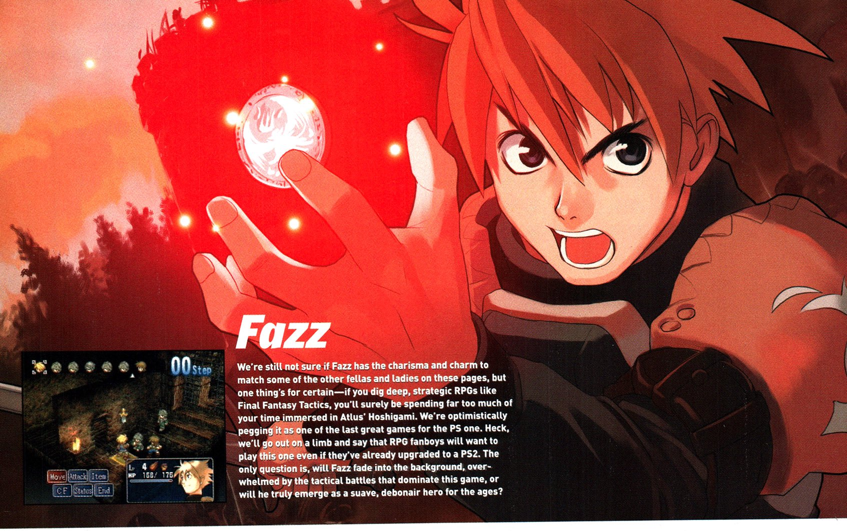
He's one of the hard-asses from Virtua Fighter 4. And even though he wears silky pajamas and has long girly hair, you can tell by the look on Lau's face that he's one pissed-off dude. One of the original eight fighters from the first game, Lau has become an iconic face of the series. When the fourth game hits the PS2 exclusively this holiday season, it will be the first time that Lau or any of his compatriots has appeared on a system other than a Sega box or a PC.

This is arcade version
Original Game © SEGA/CRI 200

ティーダ HP 966 MP 32
ユウナ HP 475 MP 86
ルールー HP 819 MP 192

Yuna and Tidus

We chuckled at all the separated-at-birth possibilities evoked by Tidus' androgynous countenance (Meg Ryan, anyone?). We balked at Yuna's strange, ethereal beauty. Yet the more time we spend with Final Fantasy X's starring duo, the more we grow to love them. Tidus (that's pronounced Tee-dus, by the way) has got one of those million-watt smiles that brings a much-needed brightness to character designer Tetsuya Nomura's (FFVII and VIII) gloomy, moody portfolio. And Yuna's exotic charms continue to beguile us. Forget for a moment the fact that FFX boasts a retooled battle system and an even bolder cinematic approach. With characters like these, Final Fantasy easily remains at the vanguard of storytelling in video games.

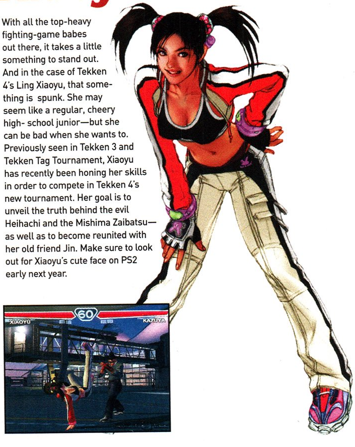


Fazz

We're still not sure if Fazz has the charisma and charm to match some of the other fellas and ladies on these pages, but one thing's for certain—if you dig deep, strategic RPGs like Final Fantasy Tactics, you'll surely be spending far too much of your time immersed in Atlus' Hoshigami. We're optimistically pegging it as one of the last great games for the PS one. Heck, we'll go out on a limb and say that RPG fanboys will want to play this one even if they've already upgraded to a PS2. The only question is, will Fazz fade into the background, overwhelmed by the tactical battles that dominate this game, or will he truly emerge as a suave, debonair hero for the ages?

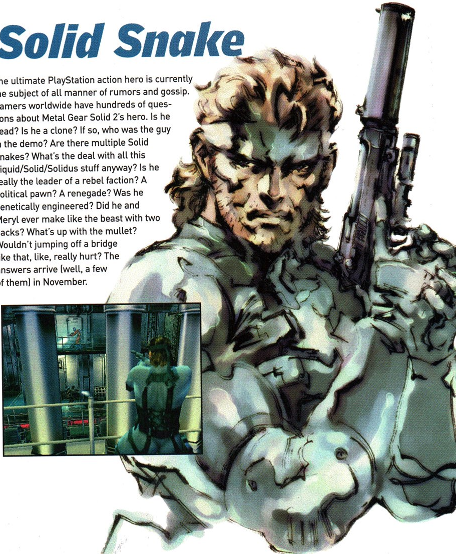
Xiaoyu

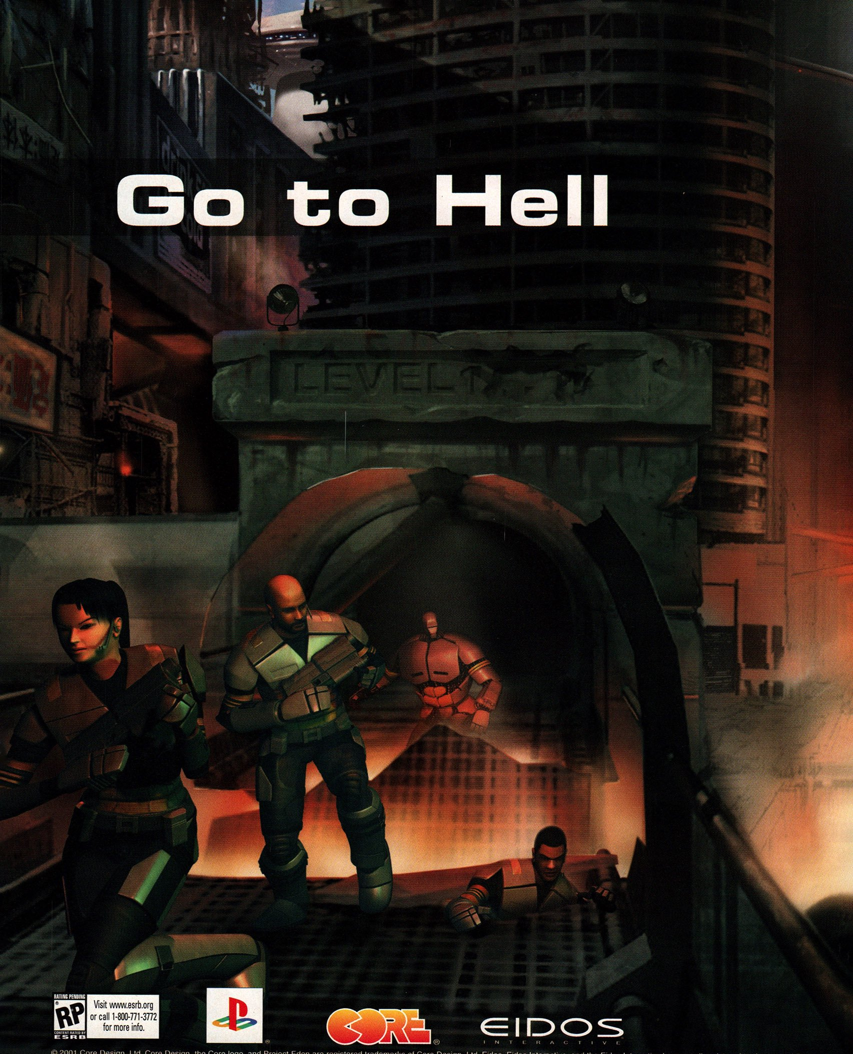
With all the top-heavy fighting-game babes out there, it takes a little something to stand out. And in the case of Tekken 4's Ling Xiaoyu, that something is spunk. She may seem like a regular, cheery high- school junior—but she can be bad when she wants to. Previously seen in Tekken 3 and Tekken Tag Tournament, Xiaoyu has recently been honing her skills in order to compete in Tekken 4's new tournament. Her goal is to unveil the truth behind the evil Heihachi and the Mishima Zaibatsu—as well as to become reunited with her old friend Jin. Make sure to look out for Xiaoyu's cute face on PS2 early next year.



Solid Snake

The ultimate PlayStation action hero is currently the subject of all manner of rumors and gossip. Gamers worldwide have hundreds of questions about Metal Gear Solid 2's hero. Is he dead? Is he a clone? If so, who was the guy in the demo? Are there multiple Solid Snakes? What's the deal with all this Liquid/Solid/Solidus stuff anyway? Is he really the leader of a rebel faction? A political pawn? A renegade? Was he genetically engineered? Did he and Meryl ever make like the beast with two backs? What's up with the mullet? Wouldn't jumping off a bridge like that, like, really hurt? The answers arrive (well, a few of them) in November.

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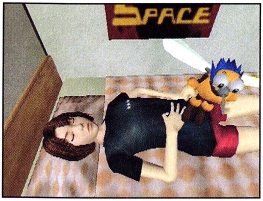
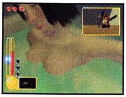
Ka, from Sony CEJ



Mosquitos are an annoyance. Leave it to the Japanese, then, to make a game out of buzzing around homes to bite and suck human blood. In Ka (*Ka* means *mosquito* in Japanese) you do just that—and fulfill any voyeuristic tendencies you might have in the process. While the three members of the Yamada family go about their business, you have to bite them and suck a set amount of blood without them noticing (like Solid Snake...with wings, a proboscis and a blood fetish). Sometimes the Yamadas need a bit of distracting to reveal bits of biteable flesh, which is your cue to annoy humankind even more by switching off lights or the TV. But if you get caught buzzing around, you'll end up in the dreaded battle mode, squaring off against your lumbering human foe who will try to swat, stamp or spray you into oblivion. How do you fight back? By biting certain spots on their bodies, natch, which makes them magically forget you exist. In Ka, the three family members are also on the odd side—that is, unless you find mothers who leap into the air while chopping your vegetables normal. Oh, and did we mention that one of the stages features the young daughter in a bathtub—and that you're instructed to bite her breasts?



BUT WILL IT EVER COME HERE?

We polled two of the well-known localizers of Japanese titles to see whether they think Ka will ever come to the U.S.

PlayStation.2
蚊

"This is exactly the kind of wacky game that makes the Japanese market so cool. For those who are turned off by the thought of vampires and undead, but still want to suck blood, a mosquito is the perfect choice! Why didn't ANYONE think of this sooner? I'm expecting that they'll introduce a viral expansion pack featuring fan favorites like West Nile and malaria. Think of the online possibilities for this game! If obtuse games like Irritating Stick can come over here without even the game show that it was based on in Japan, there's always room for something much more entertaining like this."
—Victor Ireland of Working Designs

"As much as I'd love to see Ka come to the States, the chances of someone picking it up are about as good as my getting a date with Charlize Theron. Then again, stranger things have happened..."
—Gail Salamanca of Atlus

Nine More for PS one

For the steadfast PS one player, it's sometimes difficult to find the good titles among all the kiddie games and shovelware hitting the retail racks these days. But despair not! The future's still bright—at least during this holiday season. Following are nine top-tier PS one titles that'll tickle the fancy of just about any gamer.

	Castlevania Chronicles Konami *October*	Now that the 16-bit Japanese X68000 PC game has been officially announced for a U.S. release (at $20!), everyone can enjoy this decade-old classic.
	Dragon Warrior VII Enix *November*	Lock the doors. Stock up your larder. This immensely popular Japanese RPG, with its old-school gameplay, will steal away, oh, about billion hours of your time.
	Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth Atlus *October*	There's life beyond Final Fantasy Tactics—or so Hoshigami hopes to prove, thanks to its deep strategy/RPG gameplay and charming character design.
	Mega Man X6 Capcom *November*	The Mega Man X series has always been solid, and this latest game looks to keep the tradition going. Plus, it's 2D, which has to count for something.
	Spider-Man 2 Enter: Electro Activision *September*	We *loved* the first Spider-Man—and this one looks to be just as great. Too bad all the baddies are second-tier villains, as the sequel is featuring all-new foes.
	Syphon Filter 3 Sony CEA *September*	Wow. Gabe brushes off the sophomore blues with his third outing. The game looks fantastic, and could very well be the best Syphon Filter yet.
	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 Activision *November*	Big, bold new levels. A new career mode. Plus all the great gameplay that's made Tony Hawk one of the best franchises on any system.
	Twisted Metal: Small Brawl Sony CEA *November*	It's Twisted Metal. It's from Incognito (which recently developed the spectacular TM: Black). And it's awfully cute. Cognitive dissonance, anyone?
	X-Men: Mutant Academy 2 Activision *September*	The first Mutant Academy was merely mediocre, but Activision promises that the sequel will be *much* deeper. It's also got six more characters to fight with.

DATA STREAM

KF4 This January

KING'S FIELD

Agetec has announced that it will release the RPG King's Field 4 in the U.S., and surprisingly, the game will hit stores this January!

PS2 Wolfenstein

Gray Matter, the developer of the PC title Return to Castle Wolfenstein, has revealed that the game is now headed to the PS2.

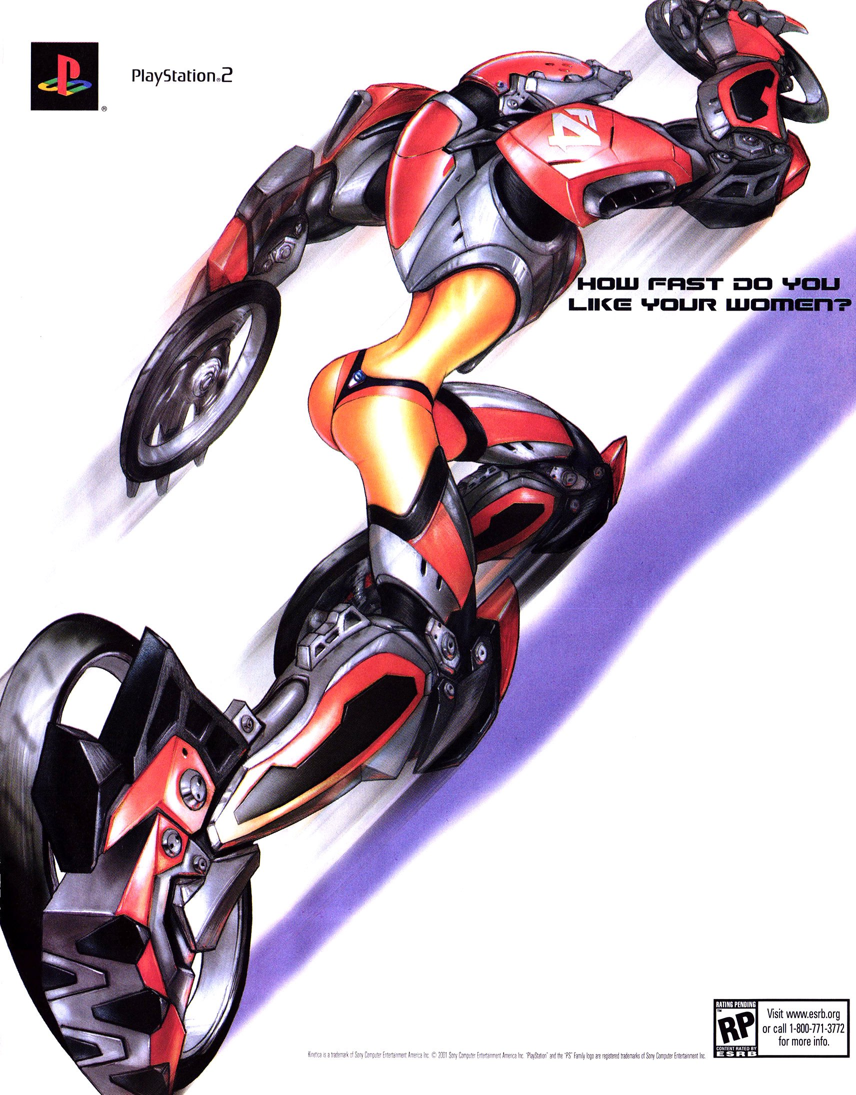
Malice Spreads

Originally one of the titles to be exclusive to Microsoft's Xbox platform, Malice is also headed to the PS2 now that Vivendi Universal has picked up the publishing rights. The big "M" can't be too happy.

Project 0 Update

Project 0, the new PS2 horror game from Tecmo's Deception team, revolves around the old superstition that a photograph can steal the subject's soul. In the game, you use a camera to battle spirits. Look for it to hit the U.S. by next summer.

PlayStation 2



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SERIOUS STREET

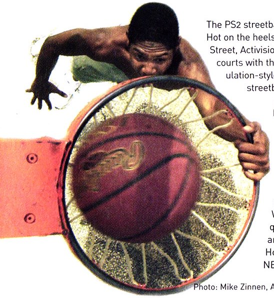


Photo: Mike Zinnen, AP

The PS2 streetball explosion is apparently on its way. Hot on the heels of EA Big's wildly successful NBA Street, Activision has thrown its hat onto the urban courts with the announcement of Street Hoops, a simulation-style basketball game featuring the greatest streetballers from around the country.

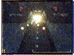
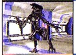
Street Hoops will be developed by Black Ops, the makers of Knockout Kings and March Madness. The big question is, how will Street Hoops separate itself from NBA Street? We're also wondering if the master of X games like Tony Hawk's Pro Skater and Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX can succeed in this new sports scene. We'll have to wait and see on the latter question, but we already have a few answers on the former. First off, Street Hoops won't feature fantasy courts, like NBA Street, but actual courts from all over major U.S. cities, including New York's legendary Rucker Park.

The game is basically simulation streetball, with all the radical moves that you might have seen on those groundbreakingly cool Nike ads that ran during this year's basketball playoffs. Expect to see those same moves in Hoops this winter. Also, the lineup of ballers won't be from the NBA. Street Hoops stars a cast of real-life urban players with names that are as creative as their moves: Hot Sauce, The Future, Half-Man Half-Amazing, The Main Event, Booger, Speedy and Headache, to name a handful. The game will also feature a rather lengthy apparel and footwear sponsorship list that includes Dada Footwear, Goat Gear, OMW, Ecko and 57 Fake.

As for gameplay, we're thin on info so far, but we do know that it's anywhere from one-on-one half-court to five-on-five full court. Next month we'll be bring you more news, more details and a sneak peek into the mo-cap session.

FALSE STARTS

Back in '96 it would have been tough to believe anyone would be looking forward to a Rainbow Studios game. That's not to say their games were crap; it's just that they tended to emphasize graphics over gameplay (especially in their "trilogy" of on-rail shooters) and didn't really have much beyond eye-candy to get the players' juices flowing. Then came Motocross Madness...and suddenly, Rainbow was a studio to watch. Now that PS2 owners have had a chance to play the kind of game Rainbow's making these days, it seems like everyone's got their eye on the Phoenix-based developer. Are they the Next Big Thing? Hey, decide for yourself. Meanwhile, we'll be featuring a similar Cinderella story of gaming every now and then. Got a suggestion? Mail it to us at opm@ziffdavis.com with the subject line "False Starts."

	Title	The Game	The Pros	The Cons
	Air Havoc Controller 1994 – PC	You take on the duties of an air-traffic controller responsible for 30 miles of Arizona airspace.	Unusual concept, great graphics and cinemas, spectacular crashes.	It only got exciting when you weren't doing your job right.
	The Hive 1995 – PC 1996 – PS one	An evil corporation has resurrected a vicious alien species. You go in and, you know, shoot stuff.	This on-rails shooter boasted some hot action and great graphics.	Limited interaction with the environment made for gameplay that was far too repetitive.
	**Deadly Tide** 1996 – PC	Another on-rails shooter. Aliens are threatening to drown Earth's cities. You go in and shoot stuff.	More great graphics and lots of underwater mayhem.	Same deal as The Hive: static backgrounds make for monotony.
	**Ravage D.C.X.** 1996 – PC	Yet another on-rails shooter. Aliens invade from another dimension. Guess what you get to do?	Still more great graphics (and sound!)—four dimensions of action!	Are you seeing a pattern here?
	Motocross Madness 1998 – PC	At last, Rainbow breaks the cycle with, well, a 'cycle game. Players compete both indoors and on huge outdoor tracks.	Enormous, free-roaming environments; great, arcadey physics; huge air time.	The limited trick system seemed sort of pointless.
	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2000 2000 – PC	It's...golf. Really, really detailed and exhaustive golf.	The heart of the game—the physics and control—prove extremely solid.	Graphics aren't up to snuff; some technical issues; lacks polish.
	Motocross Madness 2 2000 – PC	More stunts, more tracks and more interaction with the environment.	Seventy (!) tracks, more lifelike environments, better trick system.	Not as polished as previous game; some troubling graphics and compatibility issues.
	ATV Offroad Fury 2001 – PS2	Basically, Motocross Madness with two extra wheels.	Great "charging" system for jumps; brutal AI; huge environments.	Not much reward for beating the game; trick system seems limited.
	SplashDown 2001 – PS2	Motocross Madness on water? Not quite. 18 watery courses from Venice to the Everglades.	Looks like a solid, well-developed trick engine; amazing water effects.	Handling might turn out a bit too loose; no anti-aliasing at this point makes for "jaggies."
	Star Wars Racer Revenge: Racer II 2002 – PS2	The sequel to the critically acclaimed Pod Racer will feature 18 tracks on five different planets.	Graphics look stunning; Rainbow doesn't have to add much to this solid engine.	It's still far too early to say, but there wasn't much to complain about in the original.

DATA STREAM

Jackie Hits Home

Encore Software is currently developing a PS2 game based on the Jackie Chan cartoon series that airs on the WB. Expect to see it in early 2002.

Lara Fesses Up

Eidos has released a public apology to archeologist Jean-Yves Empereur for using his likeness in Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation. He apparently didn't like being in the game.

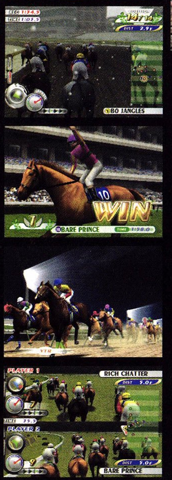
Minority Report

Activision has landed the rights to Steven Spielberg's upcoming film *Minority Report*, starring Tom Cruise. Expect a PS2 game to hit next summer alongside the movie.

PS2's Terminator

Developed by Paradigm (Spy Hunter), Infogrames has announced that Terminator for the PS2 will be a third-person action title that takes place before the movies. Look forward to it next summer!

TECMO | 100% GAMES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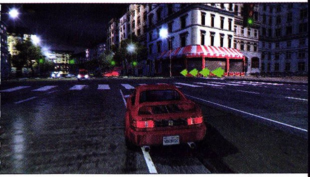


OUT OF THE MIDDLE

Middleware developer Criterion moves into the spotlight

Criterion Software is not a company most gamers are familiar with. But ask just about any game developer if they've heard of them and you'll see their eyes light up. That's because Criterion is one of the leading developers of middleware for the PS2. In case you're not familiar with the term, middleware refers to development tools created to make game design easier. In essence, middleware developers do the technological legwork, and then deliver to designers a set of tested tools that can be customized to any game.

Based in the U.K., Criterion is one of the best-known providers of this service. With a client list of over 250 developers, Criterion's RenderWare tool has powered—or will power—plenty of high-profile games on the PS2, including Grand Theft Auto 3, MX2002, Rayman Revolution, Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing and Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3. In other words, these folks know the PS2 like no one else does.

That's why, when Criterion offered to show us a new PS2 game they were creating *themselves* within their Criterion Games division, we jumped at the chance. In a cramped room inside Acclaim's E3 booth, we were shown a game known then only as SRC—Shiny Red Car—obviously a working title. We have to admit, at first glance, the game idea doesn't really seem that innovative: It's auto racing, only on streets and highways instead of on closed courses. But while the idea of racing through traffic has certainly been used before, we've not often seen it used so effectively. You're not just racing around other cars; you're racing through *traffic* that behaves as traffic should. Swerve in front of a car and it's likely to slam on its brakes and try to dodge out of your way. You'll have to contend with cars switching lanes, passing each other, braking for turns and so on. With each narrow miss, your heart rate—represented by an on-screen meter—increases. Once it reaches a critical point, you can kick in a turbo boost to create one of the fastest white-knuckle racing experiences we've seen.

Now known as Burnout, the game is set to release in November. Should we expect Criterion Games to be making more moves in the design arena? Only time will tell—but if this game is any guide, we certainly would like to see more.

PS UNDERGROUND ONLINE POLL

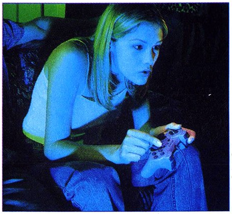
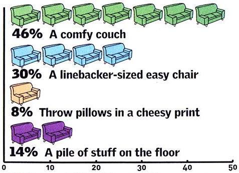


Photo by: Rafael Fuchs

What do you game on?



Total Responses: 8,530. Poll taken on 8/7/01

DREAM CAST

Now that Richard Donner has voiced interest in helming a Crazy Taxi movie, we've been thinking: Who would we cast in the flick? Check out our choices below, keeping in mind that they're entirely our "dream cast" and by no means whom we'll actually see. We've had so much fun putting this together that we've decided to every month announce a fantasy cast of other potential game films—even ones we know could never happen. Tell us how you'd cast your favorite potential game movies at opm@ziffdavis.com with the subject of DREAM CAST.

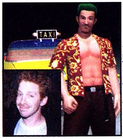


Photo by: Steve Granitz/WireImage.com

Axel: Seth Green

One look at Axel and you know right away this is the role Seth Green (*Rat Race, Austin Powers*) was meant to play. This bit of casting took about 10 seconds.

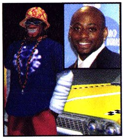


Photo by: Steve Granitz/WireImage.com

B.D. Joe: Omar Epps

You've gotta love that wide grin that's made Omar Epps (*Dracula 2000, Love & Basketball*) such a recognizable face of late. It makes him the perfect B.D. Joe.

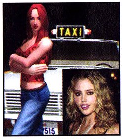


Photo by: Kevin Mazur/WireImage.com

Gena: Estella Warren

It was a tough decision, but rising star Estella Warren (*Planet of the Apes, Driven*) won us over for Gena with her pouty lips and overall sexy (yet feisty) presence.

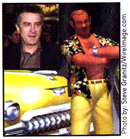


Photo by: Steve Granitz/WireImage.com

Gus: Robert De Niro

Who better to fill the role of Crazy Taxi's "old man" than the most famous taxi driver in cinema history? We'd even consider changing Gus' name to Travis Bickle.

OVERHEARD

> **"[We'll use them] if they work; if we can embellish upon them; if they can come to life. The characters in the game really have no personalities."**
>
> —Richard Donner tells About.com his thoughts on using game characters for the movie version of Crazy Taxi

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Use of Tobacco and Alcohol

PlayStation

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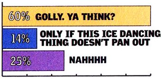
PS UNDERGROUND ONLINE POLL

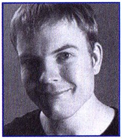
So, kid, do you want to work in the video game industry?



Total Responses: 13,215. Poll taken on 8/7/01

RYAN LOCKHART

NOT ALL FUN AND GAMES



Working for a game company isn't easy.

Why bring this up? Why devote an entire column to this matter? Well, I get lots of e-mail, and I enjoy it all. But a good chunk of the messages that dive into my inbox share a similar question: "How do I get a job in the game biz?" While that's a great question, and I love to give advice to whoever wants it, the thing that disturbs me is the reason that many of you want to make games: because you enjoy playing them.

I'm sure we can all agree on one thing: playing games is fun. But making games? Not even close. It's the kind of job, especially in the later stages, that consumes your life. Late nights and working weekends becomes the norm, and even when you are away from your desk, it doesn't stop. I think about the levels I'm building in the shower, in the car, while eating. I have literally hundreds of scrap pieces of paper and napkins with quick sketches on them. Working on video games is the most demanding and mentally draining job I've ever had (not to mention the first that severely cuts into my game-playing time).

And I love it.

"I like to play games, and I think I'd be good at making them," you say. OK, that's a great start. In fact, that's a wonderful start; a love for games is ultimately the most important quality you can have while working in this industry. There are, believe it or not, people making games who don't even like to play them (and it often shows in their work). But you have to understand that simply liking games isn't enough, especially if you want to have a job that you don't end up hating after a few months. If you don't absolutely love games—wait, better yet, if you don't have a passion for games that is so strong that it nearly brings tears to your eyes when self-analyzing yourself, then this is definitely not the career choice for you. I'm not kidding.

But passion isn't enough. Believe me, I had to learn that the hard way. You also need to love to create. If you want to build levels one day, yet have never even heard of UnrealEd or Worldcraft (or, at the very least, haven't played the crap out of Legos), then there's a problem. If you want to design your own games, yet don't have hundreds of pages of ideas already written down, again, problem. Don't think making games starts the day you get your job. Many of today's better game designers were fiddling around with ideas long before they ever started in the industry.

I apologize if I'm bursting a bubble or two here. I'm certainly not writing this to depress any potential future game-designing folks. If you're die-hard about games and have a passion for creation, then please press on—this industry needs people like you. But if this is something you'd just like to do, something that you think might be fun, think again. Keep playing games as a hobby; trust me when I say you'll be much happier. Because, frankly, if you go into this industry with the notion that it's all fun and games, a job making games will either drive you crazy or, even worse, drive you to create mediocre titles.

And that's something none of us wants.

Ryan Lockhart (ryan_zwei@yahoo.com) likes to play good games, so he only wants people who truly care about them to get jobs as designers. Damnit.

PLAYSTATION APTITUDE TEST

1. The hero in Silent Hill is...
a. dead, and wandering the land, like Kain
b. in search of his wife, who's been dead three years
c. looking for a demonic child
d. simply lost

2. The guy who demos Metal Gear Solid 2 on this month's demo disc is named...
a. Fred
b. Bob
c. Hideo
d. Jason

3. What is the first game that you'll see on this month's demo disc?
a. Extermination
b. Jak and Daxter: The Precursor Legacy
c. Dark Cloud
d. Ico

4. At this year's E3, which game was situated between Drakan and Okage in the Sony booth? (Hint: Use the 360-degree viewer on this month's disc as a guide.)
a. Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
b. Jak and Daxter: The Precursor Legacy
c. Smuggler's Run 2
d. Twisted Metal: Black

5. What does the back of Claire Redfield's jacket read in Resident Evil–Code: Veronica X?
a. Live the life
b. Let me live
c. Live and let live
d. Live and let die

6. Who was the protagonist of the original Silent Hill?
a. Harry Mason
b. Harry Manson
c. Henry Madison
d. Henry Mancini

7. Which of the following sports titles will not be or has not already been released this year by Sony CEA on PS one?
a. NFL GameDay 2002
b. NCAA GameBreaker 2002
c. NHL FaceOff 2002
d. NBA ShootOut 2002

8. What is the name of the exclusive multiplayer game included with the PS2 version of Half-Life?
a. Meltdown
b. Destruction
c. Devolution
d. Decay

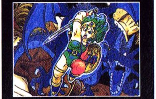
9. What is the Japanese name for Tales of Destiny II?
a. Tales of Destiny III
b. Tales of Phantasia
c. Tales of Eternia
d. Tales of Fievel

10. Which of these skaters jumped ship from Tony Hawk's Pro Skater to be involved in ESPN X Games Skateboarding?
a. Chad Muska
b. Bob Burnquist
c. Elissa Steamer
d. Rodney Mullen

Answers
1.b 2.d 3.b 4.c 5.b
6.a 7.b 8.d 9.c 10.b

DATA STREAM

DWIV Remake



Enix has announced that it will remake the popular NES RPG Dragon Warrior IV for the PS one in Japan. It's likely the new game will use the DWVII graphics engine. There's no word on a U.S. release yet.

Tron Back Online

Disney has teamed up with Monolith Productions (*No One Lives Forever*) to create a first-person action game based on the Tron license. The game should coincide with the planned release of the *Tron* movie sequel in 2003.

I Want My VGTV!

As if you don't spend enough time in front of the TV...the first-ever video game channel is on its way! Called G4, the new cable network from Comcast (the creators of E!) is set to go live in 2002.

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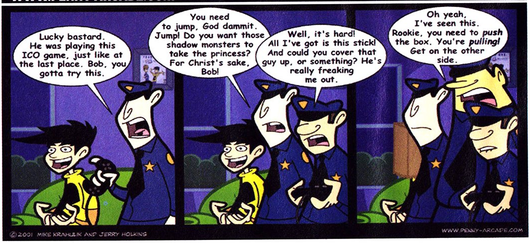
Lucky bastard. He was playing this ICO game, just like at the last place. Bob, you gotta try this.
You need to jump, God dammit. Jump! Do you want those shadow monsters to take the princess? For Christ's sake, Bob!
Well, it's hard! All I've got is this stick! And could you cover that guy up, or something? He's really freaking me out.
Oh yeah, I've seen this. Rookie, you need to *push* the box. You're *pulling!* Get on the other side.
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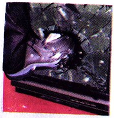

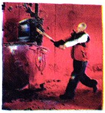

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Triple Crown
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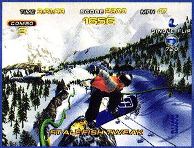
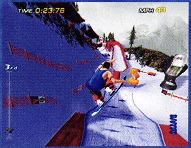
Winter. It's just better.

Cool Boarders® 2001. Ride massive arcade style courses against real world class pros like Todd Richards, Tara Dakides, Kevin Jones and Michele Taggart. Rest up. It's gonna be a long season.

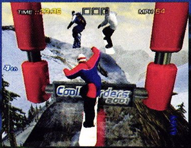
CoolBoarders® 2001


TIME 3:31:03
SCORE 2600
MPH 47
COMBO 3
1656
SINGLE FLIP
720
STALEFISH TWEAK

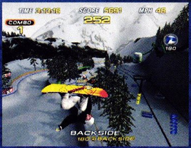
Jeremy Jones casually tweaks a switch 1440 stalefish over a 70 foot+ cliff band.


TIME 0:23:76
MPH 43
3rd

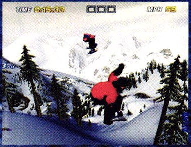
Amateur rider Trent covers huge distance with this late 180 tail grab in Canada.


MPH 64
4th
Cool Boarders 2001

Blinding speeds and endless combinations are Tara Dakides key to boardercross.


TIME 3:13:16
SCORE 5691
MPH 46
COMBO 1
252
180
BACKSIDE
180 BACKSIDE

Todd Richards gets big style points with this inverted backside 180 in the Highland Half Pipe.

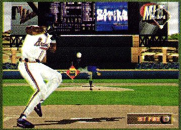

TIME 0:15:33
MPH 55

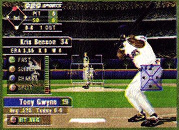
Kevin Jones grabbing stalefish over powder transitions.

PlayStation®

MLB 2002

Total Control


Strike
MLB
HIT PWR


989 SPORTS
Kris Benson 34
Tony Gwynn 19
HIT AVG

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PLAYERS CHOICE

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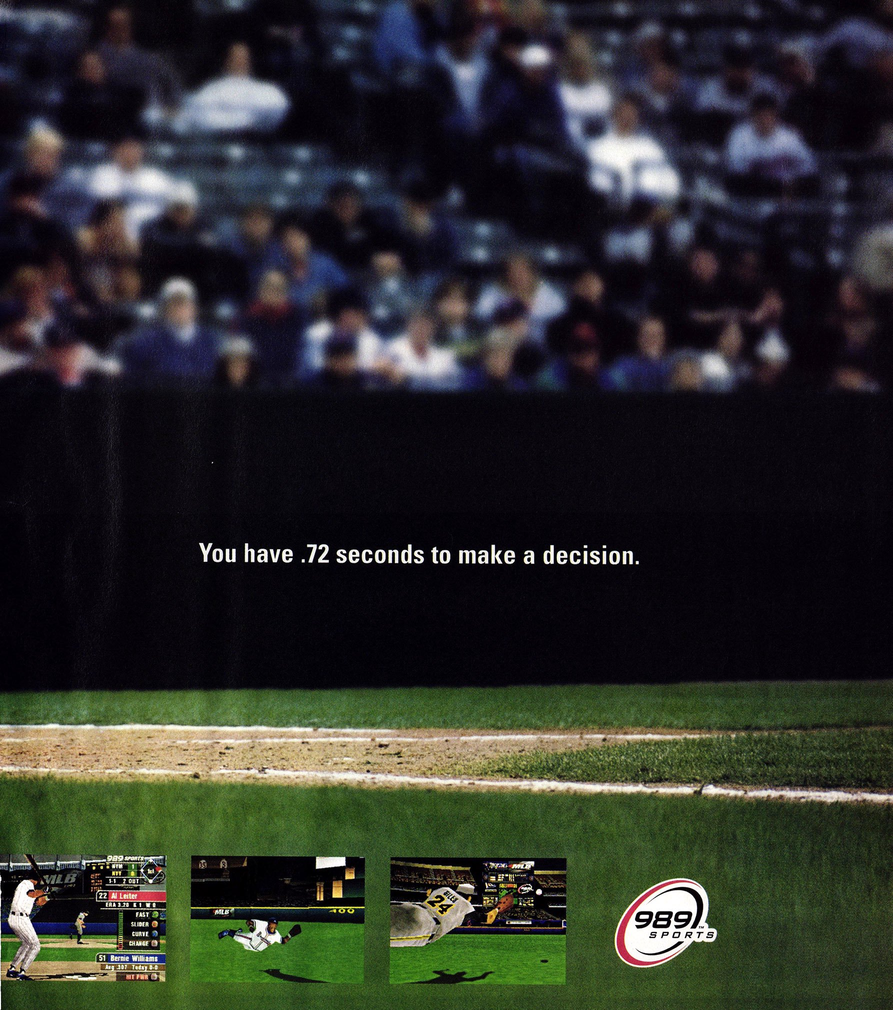
You have .72 seconds to make a decision.
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NYM 1
NYY 0
1-1 2 OUT
MLB
22 Al Leiter
ERA 3.20 K 1 W 0
FAST
SLIDER
CURVE
CHANGE
51 Bernie Williams
Avg .307 Today 0-0
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MLB
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24
989 SPORTS

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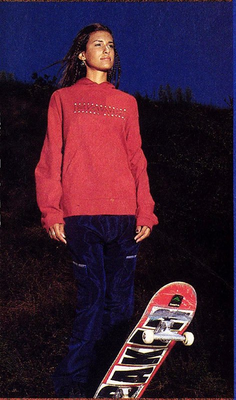
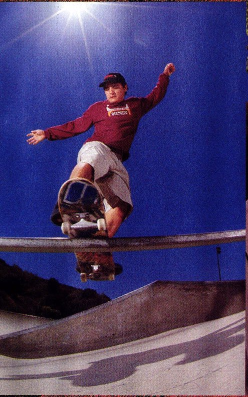
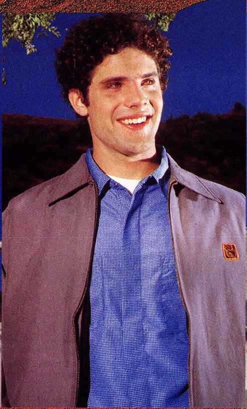


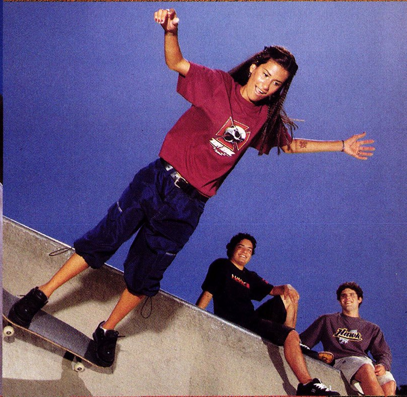
HAWK

HAWK-ING FASHION

He was easily the world's most recognizable skater when Tony Hawks' Pro Skater blew up. Now Mr. Hawk's clothes are almost as popular as his game.







DROPPING IN

Luciana prepares for drop in. She's clad in the "Thin Flow" knit ($44) and "Channel 4" pants ($64).

QUICK TRIP KICKFLIP

Brett takes a shortcut down the stairs with a kickflip while wearing a combo of "Mad Max" shirt ($19) and "Revo" shorts ($46).

SLIDE AWAY

Anthony pulls off a frontside boardslide while sporting a "Half Pipe" T-shirt ($22), "Skill Saw" shorts ($52) and a "Corp Skull" cap ($20).

A MOMENT OF PEACE

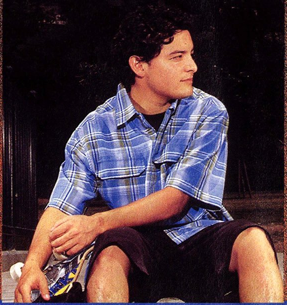
Brett takes a moment away from his board while wearing an "Old School" woven shirt ($44) with a sweet "Cold Press" jacket ($74).

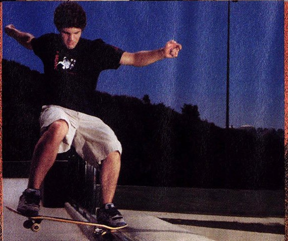
TOP OF THE PIPE

Luciana works on her kickturn in a "Moo Vintage Skull" T-shirt ($19) and "Channel 4" pants.

Like the clothes you see? To get your hands on them go to www.hawkclothing.com. Click on an item you like and it'll fast-track you to the closest retailer in your area. Easy enough. There are more styles and goods than our pages could hold. We highly recommend you check it out.

photographs by Joe Toreno





THOUGHT PROCESS

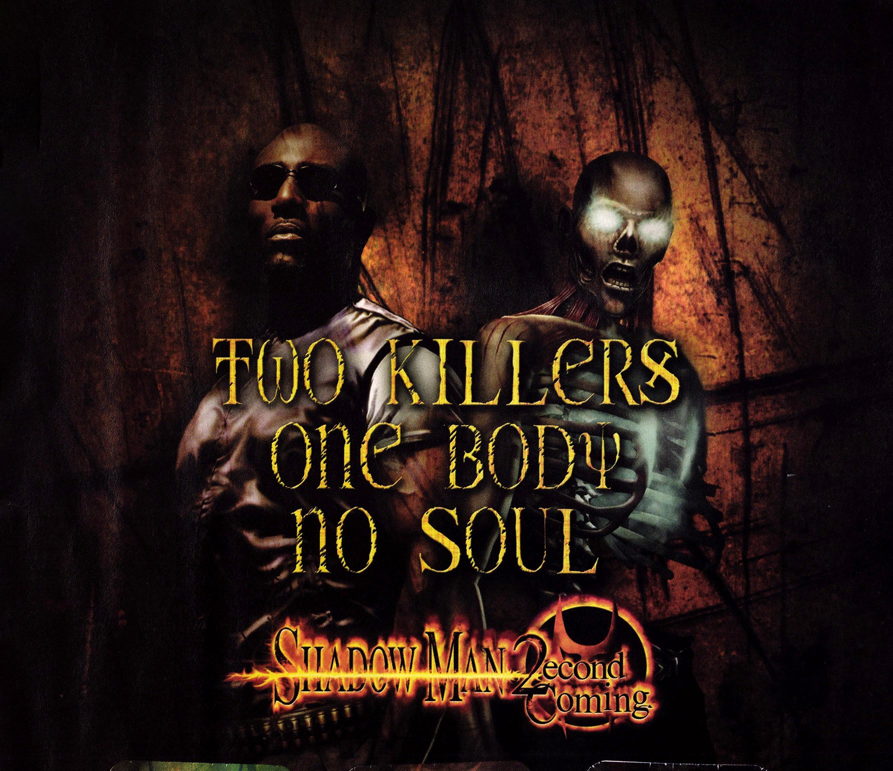
Anthony considers his next run while dressed in an "Algebra" woven shirt ($44) and "Factory Air" shorts ($46).

FLYBY

Anthony soars in a "Tarnished" T-shirt ($19) and "Skill Saw" shorts ($52). Luciana relaxes in a "Moo Vapour" T-shirt ($19) and "Channel 4" pants ($64). Brett reconsiders the fall of the Roman Empire in a "Moo Uber Alles" T-shirt ($19) and "Channel 4" shorts ($46).

BY A NOSE

Brett works out the kinks in his noseslide while wearing a "Moo Clip Art" T-shirt ($19) and "Skill Saw" shorts ($52).



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Herd it?
Tip it?
Herd it?

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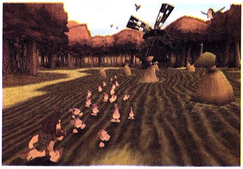
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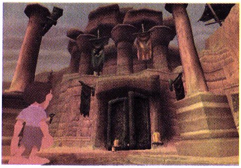
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FORGOTTEN GEMS

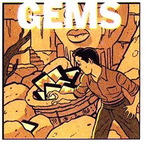


Illustration by Mark Matcho

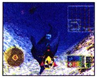
A few months back (*OPM* 46), we listed five of our favorite forgotten gems—overlooked classics that have been buried deep beneath many of the PS one's bigger releases. Since then, you've responded with a flurry of your favorite hidden treasures, many of which predate our fine magazine! If you've got a title you'd like to see featured in a future issue, shoot us an e-mail at opm@ziffdavis.com (mark the subject "Forgotten Gems"). Remember, we're looking for lesser-known, underhyped titles that predate our Review Archive. Keep 'em coming!

MotorToon Grand Prix: Graphics, goodies and fun. The second I popped this game into my PlayStation again, all of the old feelings of excitement came back. The wacky intro, the wild colors and the wild cars all create a great gaming experience.
Mark Uyeda
muyeda@apple.com

The game that I saw that didn't appear in your Review Archive was **Bushido Blade**. I thought this was one of the greatest games for the early PS one. Though almost impossible to complete, I thought it was super cool when I got that gun-shooting guy.
Brendan Chambers
strider787@yahoo.com

I think a forgotten gem is a game called **Disruptor**. It is set in the future with futuristic weapons and enemies. It says on the back of the case it was made in 1996 by Insomniac, Interplay and Universal Interactive Studios. I can't find it in your Review Archive or anywhere else. I still think it's a good game despite the graphics, and I hope the rest of you do, too.
Zach Segboer
sk8boarder_76@hotmail.com

Pandemonium: Lush levels, original gameplay, colorful graphics, two controllable characters, 2.5 dimensions and, best of all, a good time.
Dan Balser
Brooklyn, N.Y.



I saw the article called Forgotten Gems, and that made me think back to the time before I got my first PlayStation. There's a game called **Treasures of the Deep**. I used to go over to my friend's house and play it all the time. You were in a submarine and the object was to search for treasure. This was back in 1997, if I remember correctly. This game and Tekken 3 were the reasons I got a PlayStation. But by the time I got one, it was the eve of 1998, and the game was nowhere to be found. I never did find a copy of Treasures of the Deep.
Mike Taylor
Email address withheld by request

PEDALING MIRRA

The PS2's first must-own BMX experience

Whether or not you're on the PS one BMX bandwagon, progressive PS2 owners with an X games bent should keep their eyes on one hot prospect: Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2. The graphical leap from PS one to PS2 should be enough to turn heads—but Mirra promises to offer more than just a fresh coat of paint. Still, we have to wonder whether the glut of X games has hit a ceiling in creativity and interest. Really now, is there more that can be done?

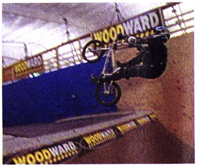
"You could ask that same question about football games, racing games and fighting games, too," says David Luntz, president and CEO of Z-Axis, the developer of Mirra. "I think the bar has been reset with the release of the next generation of game systems. Things you could only dream about doing on the PS one can now be brought to reality on PS2."

The Mirra sequel features new art, new code and massive environments that are four to five times bigger than those in the original. They're so overwhelming that you might not see the same area twice in different runs—even if you want to. Which leads us to believe, after just a few minutes with a previewable version of the game, that it might just be a must-own.

"The original Mirra BMX has been bought and played by more people than any other BMX game in the world," Luntz says. "Given the game's fan base and how radically better the sequel is, I think Mirra 2 will retain the crown going forward. Besides, from what I've read and heard, no other BMX games will be coming out on PS2 for at least six to nine months after Mirra 2 is released."

Along with its headstart in the PS2 market, winning the favor of sponsors is another boost that should elevate the Mirra experience. "For the same reasons it's cool to have real pro riders like Dave Mirra in the game, it's also cool to be able to earn real sponsorships like the pros do," Luntz says. "We have over 50 real bikes in the game from companies such as Haro, Huffy and Standard."

Once you've conquered the competitions, dominated the Proquest, and flummoxed your friends with biking brilliance, Mirra still gives replayability with a monster Park Editor. "It's by far the most flexible and advanced editor of any extreme game to date," Luntz claims. "You can create a multilevel BMX park, set at nighttime, with cars driving by, and then light your level by adding real streetlights which illuminate the things you've built."



Fine, fine. So Mirra's going to be great. But, games aside, we want to know who the better biker is—Mat Hoffman or Dave Mirra?

"I'm not in a position to judge, but I'll leave you with one fact to consider," Luntz says. "Mirra has won more X-Games medals than any other athlete in history, including Hoffman and Tony Hawk."

PS UNDERGROUND SPECIAL FEATURE

SO HOW THE HECK DID THEY DO THAT?

By the time you've gotten to this page in *OPM*, we're pretty sure you've already played through this month's disc. And we're also pretty sure that you were amazed by (among other things) the walk-through of Sony's E3 booth, in which you can manually zoom and rotate the on-screen video. Heck, we go to E3 every year, and we were still wowed by this nifty new feature. So how was it done?

The sequence was created by Enroute, using a new technology it calls Immersive Video. Basically, a special multilens camera is guided through Sony's booth and then the separate video streams are blended and combined.

Grabbing footage from the E3 show floor was no walk in the park for Enroute. "The sheer scope of the booth and the breadth of displays within it created a challenge," Thom Randmaa, director of production, told us. The trouble was worth it, though—the end result is stunning. "Our intention was to bring everyone into Sony's booth and enable them to virtually see the new games revealed at the show."

For fans of this new technology, there's good news: Enroute says more PS2 projects are on the way.

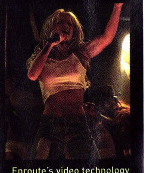
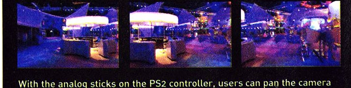


Photo: Steve Granitz, **Wireimage**

Enroute's video technology will also be used in the PS2 Britney Spears title.



With the analog sticks on the PS2 controller, users can pan the camera left and right to see all 360 degrees around them.

This is the special camera used to film all the angles.

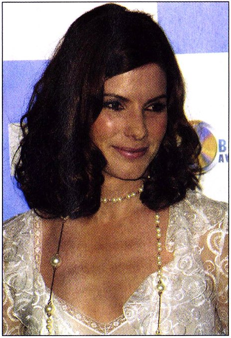


Photo by Kathryn Indiek/WireImage.com

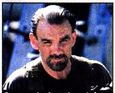
OVERHEARD

“PS2 is the only place where I can legally explode things and not harm anyone.”

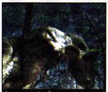
—Sandra Bullock (*Miss Congeniality*) games with a bang

WHEN DINOS SNACK

It’s no secret that Capcom’s Dino Crisis games were greatly inspired by the *Jurassic Park* movies, but does inspiration run both ways? One might think so with the following little nod to Dino Crisis in this summer’s *Jurassic Park III*. (Note to those who haven’t seen the movie: Don’t read on—there’s a potential spoiler). The first guy you end up seeing consumed by a dino in *Jurassic Park III* is a mercenary named Cooper. If you’ve played Dino Crisis, you might remember that in the game’s opening cutscene, one of the Special Forces team members is quickly devoured by a T-Rex—and his name just happens to be Cooper. A strange coincidence? Perhaps—but we think not.



Cooper before lunch in *Jurassic Park III*

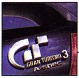


Cooper being munched on in Dino Crisis

The Music of Gran Turismo 3

Sure, GT3’s music manager is pretty rad, letting you set and arrange your song list—but what it doesn’t tell you is which albums the songs come from, in case you want to hear more from a particular artist. But don’t fret—we got your back.

Apollo Four Forty
“Stop the Rock”
from *Getting High on Your Own Supply*



Dave Audé
“Go Gran Turismo”
GT3 exclusive

BT
“Mad Skillz-Mic Chekka”
from *Movement in Still Life*

CiRRUS
“Break In”
from *Drop the Break*

The Cult
“She Sells Sanctuary”
from *Love*

Eight Stops Seven
“Satisfied”
from *In Moderation*

Elite Force
“Call It Brisco”
from *Daytrip to Brisco*

Goldfinger
“99 Red Balloons”
from *Stomping Ground*

Grand Theft Audio
“As Good As It Gets”
from *Blame Everyone*

Grinspoon
“Champion”
from *Guide to Better Living*

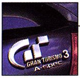
Jimi Hendrix Experience
“Stone Free”
from *Are You Experienced?*

Judas Priest
“Turbo Lover”
from *Turbo*

Junkie XL
“Def Beat”
from *Saturday Teenage Kick*

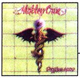
Daiki Kasho
“Glowl,” “Mirage,” “Obscure,” “Sky Scraper” and “Strike Breaker”
GT3 exclusives

Lenny Kravitz
“Again”
from *Greatest Hits*



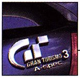
Lenny Kravitz
“Are You Gonna Go My Way?” (GT Remix)
GT3 exclusive

Methods of Mayhem
“Crash”
from *Methods of Mayhem*



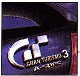
Mötley Crüe
“Kickstart My Heart”
from *Dr. Feelgood*

Papa Roach
“Never Enough”
from *Infest*



Raekwon
“Determination”
GT3 exclusive

Powerman 5000
“Supernova Goes Pop”
from *Tonight the Stars Revolt!*



Snoop Dogg
“Dogg’s Turismo 3”
GT3 exclusive

GAME DEVELOPERS*

GARY TAXALI.COM

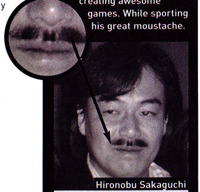
Illustration by Gary Taxali

(*WITH MOUSTACHES)

The first in a series profiling the world’s finest developers. With moustaches.

Recently in the limelight for directing this summer’s sci-fi adventure flick, *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*, Hironobu Sakaguchi is one of Japan’s most respected game developers—thanks in no small part to having created the Final Fantasy series (which has sold over 35 million copies worldwide). Sakaguchi is currently working on localizing FFX for the U.S. market, overseeing progress on FFXI, and has begun work on his next big movie project.

Although he’s had such a great legacy of hit games, Sakaguchi recently faced tough criticism because of poor financial decisions he made for Square. As a result, he was demoted from vice president to an “executive creator.” But no matter how he stands within the company, he will no doubt go on creating awesome games. While sporting his great moustache.



Hironobu Sakaguchi

Games he’s worked on: Rad Racer (Nintendo), Death Trap (PC), Chrono Trigger (Super NES), Final Fantasy series (multiplatforms)

Moustache Rating: **8.5**

Clish MacLaver's
GOSSIP GOSSIP

Gossip, rumor and scandal. Gaming's biggest secrets dug up and served with gravy.

I come across gossip all the time thanks to my network of pals and my ability to drink like a fish while speaking to game-industry windbags. But what about you? Do you hear any gossip? If you do, drop me a line at clish_maclaver@ziffdavis.com. I'd love to hear from you.

PS one in the Palm of Your Hand?

If you live pretty much anywhere in the world other than here in the U.S., you can get your hands on one of a growing number of very groovy **Sony cell phones.** They all look neat, they all have funky features, and they're increasingly becoming powerful little digital entertainment boxes. In Europe, for example, the latest edition is an MP3-playing phone that uses MagicGate Memory Sticks. Jealous? Well, if my sources are to be trusted, the future of portable phones could be arriving here sooner than we expect. Why am I telling you this? Rumor has it that Sony's next dabble in the world of "computer entertainment" and digital convergence will be an attack on the cell phone, the portable Web browser and, indeed, the Game Boy.

Perplexed? Imagine a cell phone with **a super-high-quality color screen, a high-speed Web connection, and (drum roll, please) the PS one chipset.** The technology, downsized even more so than what's found inside the PS2, will allegedly be ready and able to download specially tweaked games straight from the Internet, or from those lovely purple Memory Sticks.

Given that Sony is working with **NTT DoCoMo** in Japan on some form of online gaming platform based on PS one technology, and that **AT&T** is looking to release the DoCoMo cell-phone system on its network sometime next year, there are certainly a lot of key facts that could point to Sony's next big step. Do I know whether news of the gaming phone is fact or fiction? No. Do I think it's possible? Yes, although it strikes me as wishful thinking by those who are gossiping about it. Would I buy one if it were ever released? You betcha. Wouldn't you?

Twisted Metal: World

After the immense success of Twisted Metal: Black both critically and commercially, it seems foolish for anyone to even suggest to us that **a sequel** isn't in the works. Although unconfirmed, I heard some gossip lately that another game was being touted, and that we can almost certainly expect (you guessed it, because I talk about this every month) an **episodic, online game** that allows you to pick and choose your way through a new story and new environments. Some of this speculation may have been fueled by word of the online "add-on" disc for Twisted Metal: Black due in November, but the rumors of the new game are definitely focused on a product sometime next year.

Sega and Microsoft Rumor: Again

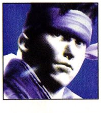
Every time Sega issues any kind of statement about altering its business plan (as it did in early August), some bright spark comes up with the theory that **Microsoft is all set to swoop in and buy the whole thing.** Sure, it would be a sweet deal for M$ if the price was right—but as with so many things, all indications point to the latest batch of rumors being nothing more than doom and gloom mongering. As far as any of my contacts are aware, Sega is committed to being a multiformat game developer. And as I've said several times in the past, **the PS2 is most definitely the main concern for Sonic and chums.**

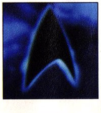
> "The PS2 is most definitely the main concern for Sonic and chums."

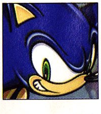
Jedi Knights and Clones Who Attack

So what do you think of the name of the new Star Wars movie? Personally, I don't think it's *that* bad, given the original *Flash Gordon*-esque intentions of the series, but some folks are clearly offended by it. I can only hope they won't be offended by the roster of games that LucasArts is rumored to have lined up for next year. Although we won't see a repeat of the *Episode I* deluge, it's apparent that the teams are working on a number of secret projects that borrow heavily from the new movie. The most gossiped about is **the inevitable follow-up to the successful Starfighter**, which I hear will push the storyline into the 10-year time period between Episodes I and II. Expect to see the new wedge-shaped Jedi starfighters and new bad-guy ships that are evolving in a distinctly TIE fighter-ish direction. Other rumored *Ep. II*-inspired titles include **a lightsaber duelling game.** Personally, I seriously doubt this one, as Masters of Teräs Käsi was such a dire and appalling experience. Given the lightsaber duelling slant of the new movie, though, it could be a possibility. I'll keep you posted.

Finally, while not an *Ep. II* game, I hear that the awesome PC title **Jedi Knight II** is set to head to consoles later next year. Currently everything is being slowed down by both Sony and Microsoft chasing after an exclusive deal with the Lucas guys. Let's hope the X-block doesn't get this one, as it truly is an incredible-looking game.







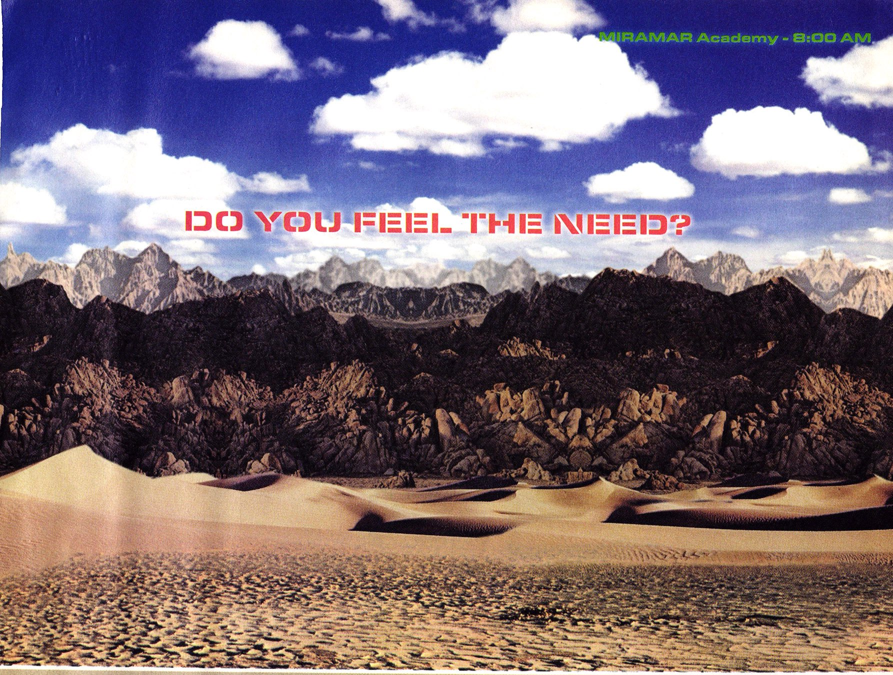
METAL GEAR SOLID 2 WATCH

It's less than three months 'til we'll have MGS2 actually in our hands. Excited? Here's a recap of all the rumors:

Solid Snake is dead—the guy in the game is a genetically engineered clone. • Meryl comes back as a playable character. • Solidus (the president) is actually Ocelot, who is actually Snake's brother. • The ninja in MGS2 is a genetically engineered clone. • Snake dies at the end of the game. • Kojima has clarified his position that while this may not be the last Metal Gear, it will be the last one he works on.

BITS AND BOBS

It appears that the Silent Hill team isn't too keen on the idea of producing an episodic series based on the franchise. Whether this means the rumor I reported last month is complete bull, or if a different team is working on the project, I don't know. • There's apparently a follow-up to Ico already in the works, and it's said to look even more gorgeous than the first (if that's possible). • Work on a new Gran Turismo is set to start in earnest any day now, I hear. Expect lots of online goodies next time. • Midnight Club 2 is almost ready to be unveiled. Expect a major graphical overhaul and faster load times. • Game rights to the new Star Trek series, Enterprise, are currently under negotiation. Activision has the Star Trek gig as of now, but it's unclear if that includes the new show as well.



TOP GUN™

COMBAT ZONES

coming your way at mach 2!

TITUS

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

PlayStation®2

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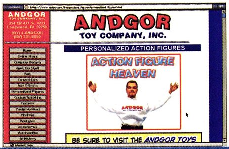
EVERYONE
VIOLENCE



Bookmarks

www.andgor.com
Get a custom action figure of *yourself* made for a mere $300.

www.roadfood.com
Planning a road trip? Find out the "best" restaurants on the way. Some surprisingly good reviews included.

www.scea.com/underground
Home site for our newest partners in crime. Visit, or Maggie will haunt you. Wait—visit, or Maggie *won't* haunt you.

www.memepool.com
A seemingly random collection of Internet oddities. And by "oddities" we mean ODDitites.

www.americangods.com
The official site of the new novel by Neil Gaiman, creator of the dark comic *Sandman*, complete with cool road journal that reads like a gothic story. While you're there, why not pick up a copy of his *Neverwhere* novel? It's a great read.

www.poopoochoochoo.com
Pop-culture fascination taken to the extreme.

www.cosmicdebris.com
Cool T-shirts and gear as worn by Fatboy Slim, Britney Spears and Courtney Love.

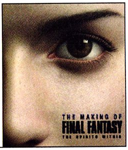
music.adcritic.com
Want to know what the music is in a particular commercial on TV? Now you can find out.

www.starlive.com/pastwebsites1997.htm
Visit some of the hottest sites from four years ago. Yeah, they're weird, and usually irrelevant, but they're oddly touching.

www.atomfilms.com
Lots of strange film shorts. Do a search for "Meat Clown" and enjoy the madness.

www.theonion.com
We know you're going to love this month's P.S. page. Visit the creators, and read all the other great stuff. Then try not to wet yourself.

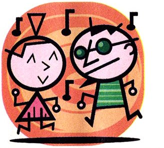
BEHIND THE FANTASY



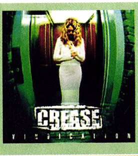
Like the movie, *The Making of Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* (BradyGames, $29.99) won't win any awards for its writing. The often-dry text can definitely use some massaging from the sure hands of a good editor. But also like the movie, the book makes up for its shortcomings with splendid visuals and tons of nifty details. Each page of this coffee-table hardcover tome is full of interesting imagery, from sketches to storyboards to renders and stills from the film. What's most interesting about *The Making of* is how all the behind-the-scenes info really helps add life to the film. The book chronicles the painstaking process that went into producing this movie, and includes tasty minutiae along with extra materials that never made it into *The Spirits Within*. From the explanation for why the Phantoms move the way they do, to the detailed look at the sole of Aki's shoe, this is the kind of stuff that fanboys will geek out over. Heck, even those of you with just a casual interest in the film will find much to enjoy here.

Sound Station

By John Scalzi



We've got two new extreme sports games this month, and you know what that means: extreme sports soundtracks! Check out these gems from ESPN Skateboarding and Dave Mirra 2.

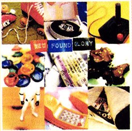


Crease: *Vindication*

Roadrunner Records
Featured In: ESPN X Games Skateboarding

Largely faceless rock album, featuring a largely faceless ballad ("Spin Around") destined for light-to-medium rotation on your local alterna-rock station, a largely faceless cover song ("Jenny (867-5309)") and lots of other hard-driving but light-sticking music that slips right off the mind. Crease finally makes an impression with "Non-User," but since the song is in defense of getting high, I don't know if that's a good thing.

Final Score ●●◖

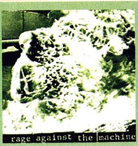


New Found Glory: *New Found Glory*

MCA Records
Featured In: ESPN X Games Skateboarding

These guys crack me up, mostly because their music is largely an essay on how not to deal with women; song after song approaches the opposite sex with a combination of confusion, antagonism and holy terror. "You gotta watch out for the beautiful ones!" they warn us in "Boy Crazy." The good news is at least these guys slather their misery with cheery punk-pop hooks. So even if they're miserable, you'll enjoy it.

Final Score ●●●◖

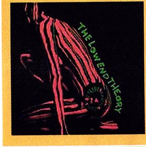


Rage Against the Machine: *Rage Against the Machine*

Epic Associated Records
Featured In: Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2

Of all the rock stars in the world, the one I'd least like to be is Zach de la Rocha. The man is so political, so angry, so damn committed that it's got to be just plain exhausting. Fortunately, I don't have to be Zach, I just have to listen to him and the boys tear through their songs like pinko pit bulls. Each track off this self-titled album delivers a snarl, a social lecture and a hot, sizzling serving of rock, baby, rock. I'll take some more of this.

Final Score ●●●●

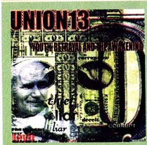


A Tribe Called Quest: *The Low End Theory*

Jive Records
Featured In: Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2

This is cited by some as the greatest hip-hop album ever; I'm not going to make that claim, but I'll be more than happy to put it in the top 10. There's lots to love, from the jazz-saturated samples and grooves to the silky-smart rhymes by Q-Tip and Phife Dawg. And while the album does get silly at times, it also features whip-saw sharp commentary on the music biz and on the relations between the sexes.

Final Score ●●●●◖



Union 13: *Youth, Betrayal and the Awakening*

Epitaph Records
Featured In: ESPN X Games Skateboarding

Mostly standard-issue grouchy California punk, but there's one aspect of this album I like: Four of the tracks are in Spanish, and not only is it a nice change to have someone barking at you in a different language, but these songs are generally a notch up from the English songs (I particularly like "Mundo Egotista," which is like four 45-second songs all smooshed together). It's just enough to tip this one into "recommend" territory.

Final Score ●●●

If RATM had been around when John Scalzi started reviewing music, Zach would have been ranting about Reaganomics. Visit his Web page at www.scalzi.com or he'll read you some of his own lyrics.

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Without warning, it came down from the sky. A dark, mysterious force unleashed by an evil spirit. The tranquil village of Norune was no match for such immense power. In the blink of an eye, destruction was complete. But amid the ruin, there is hope. A brave young warrior, Toan, armed with only a magical gem, faces the ultimate task of rebuilding the world. Venture with him deep underground to discover clues and gather vital elements of life—trees, rivers, houses and more—that will help restore civilization. Epic battles, macabre demons and daring rescues lie before you. As does the fate of the world. Will rubble be eternal? Or will it flourish once again?

TEEN
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Comic Mischief
and Violence

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DVD Reviews

by John Scalzi

STARRING:
Malcom McDowell

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE BOX SET

There are two types of movie buffs: The type for whom the song "Singin' in the Rain" reminds them of Gene Kelly, and the type who are reminded of Malcom McDowell in *A Clockwork Orange*, who sings the tune while kicking the crap out of a man and raping his wife. No, don't tell me which you are—I really don't want to know. But if you're in the second camp, this box set has appeal. Along with Stanley Kubrick's horrifically dark comic mediation on violence and society (rated "X" when it was released and still not at all for kids), there's a remastered CD of Walter Carlos' then-revolutionary score, a commemorative booklet, and a still photo and 35mm film frame. No extras to speak of on the actual DVD, though.

Movie Score ●●●●● **DVD Extras Score** ●●

BLOW: SPECIAL EDITION

(Johnny Depp, Penelope Cruz)

Johnny Depp stars as George Jung, the guy who turned cocaine into the hot drug of the '70s. Depp, who's made a career out of playing sleazebags, does just fine with this one, but your tolerance for coked-out losers will dictate your tolerance for this flick. On the other hand, excellent DVD goodies, including commentary by director Ted Demme and the real George Jung, documentaries on coke's impact on Columbia and on addiction, deleted scenes with commentary, and—cool idea—a "fact and trivia" subtitle track.

Movie Score ●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●◖

CITIZEN KANE: SPECIAL EDITION

(Orson Welles, Joseph Cotton)

Citizen Kane is generally acknowledged as the greatest film of all time, and it's not just because film critics are the sort of geeks who like old black-and-white films where people dress funny and there are hardly any explosions. It's because this film gets it all right: great script, excellent acting, fabulous and innovative photography (for its time), and a whole load of cinematic innovations that expanded film's vocabulary. This DVD comes packed with commentary by director and

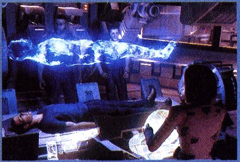
DVD News

IT'S NOT TELEVISION, IT'S WONKAVISION

The big news at press time (other than that whole *Attack of the Clones* debacle) is all about *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, believe it or not. It seems that Warner Home Video has decided that anamorphic widescreen (a.k.a. "letterboxing") is not "family-friendly," and thus are releasing this long-awaited DVD special edition of the beloved flick exclusively in full-frame (a.k.a. "pan and scan") instead of releasing both versions as promised. Videophiles are in an uproar; you can sign a petition to protest this decision at www.petitiononline.com/wonkadvd.

FINAL WORD ON THE SPIRITS WITHIN

Columbia Tristar has confirmed that the *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* DVD will be available on Oct. 23. Expected features include multiple audio commentaries, an interactive documentary, an alternate opening sequence, those outtakes we told you about last month, an isolated musical score track with optional commentary by composer Elliot Goldenthal and even a music video. Plus, the disc is said to include a "workshop" with seven character files, three vehicle-scale comparisons, two face wraps, character morphs, matte-art exploration, and a re-editing function to alter the film's final scene. No official date yet for the PS2-exclusive version, though. We're keeping our fingers crossed.



GREETINGS, PROGRAM!

Disney is preparing to release a 20th anniversary edition of *Tron*. The package, due to arrive on Jan. 15, will be a two-disc set, with the second disc incorporating all kinds of special features, including a history of computer animation in film and video games.

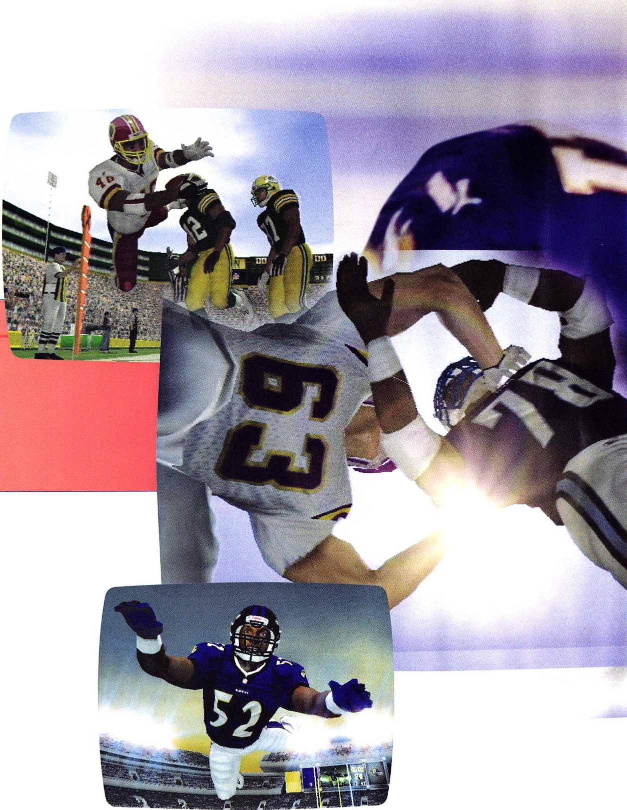
GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

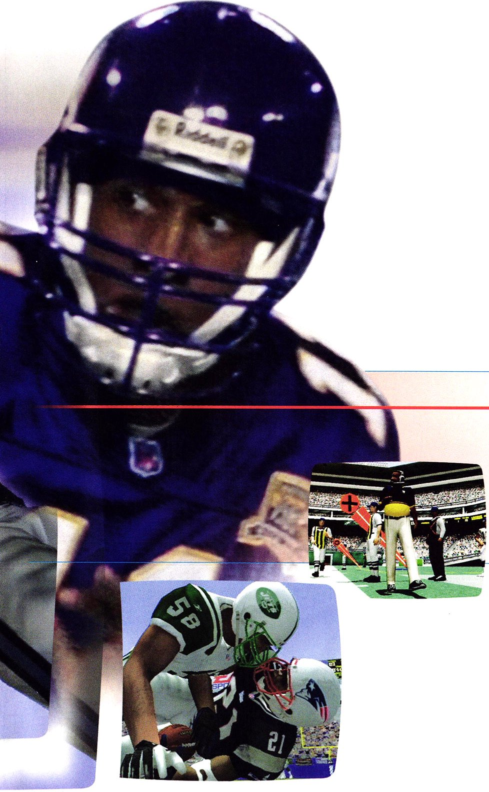
It's official: Fox and Lucasfilm have confirmed the upcoming release of *Willow: The Special Edition*. The package will include commentary, a new documentary on the film, an additional documentary titled *Making Of An Adventure*, an effects featurette, original theatrical trailers, TV spots, a still photo gallery and more. You'll be able to get it on Nov. 27 for $26.98.

AS SATISFYING AS A DAMN FINE CUP OF COFFEE

Though this has apparently been rumored for a while, we've found what appears to be some solid confirmation: The first season of *Twin Peaks* should arrive on Dec. 4. According to the folks at videopremiereawards.com, the package will include commentary by director/creator David Lynch (though other sources claim there will be no commentary; only an interview) and will be the first television series to be converted to DTS sound.

EA

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Down here, introductions are rarely in the form of a handshake.
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It's in the gam

Motorcraft
21
8
DU PONT

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ALLTEL
Mobil
02
DU PONT
24
MONTE CARLO
Yahoo! 10
EAGLE ONE 10

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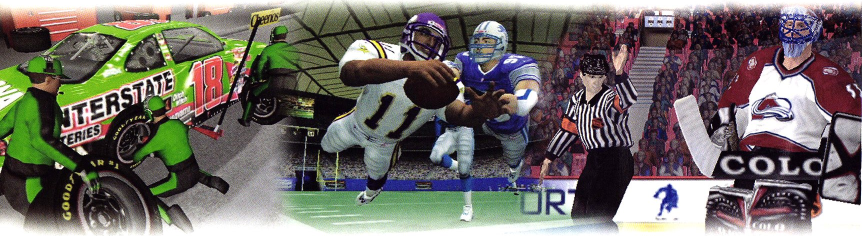

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easports.com

PlayStation 2 XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE GAME BOY COLOR PC

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

NASCAR NFL PLAYERS INC NHLPA

Welles friend Peter Bogdanovich and Roger Ebert, tons of storyboards, photos and correspondence, the documentary *The Battle Over Citizen Kane*, interviews with Welles and cast members and—why not?—the famous Welles radio production of *War of the Worlds*.

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●●

DRIVEN: SPECIAL EDITION
(Sylvester Stallone, Estelle Warren)

There's only one good reason to see this film, and that is to watch director Renny Harlin (who makes lots of good action scenes in otherwise bad films) find new and exciting ways to crumple a race car down to roughly the same size as a flattened beer can. Otherwise, it's a Sylvester Stallone flick, which means no plot, no tension and no reason to care. DVD extras include a documentary on the special effects, audio commentary from Harlin, a selection of deleted scenes and a video by Jo Dee Messina.

Movie Score ●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●

HEATHERS: SPECIAL EDITION
(Christian Slater, Winona Rider)

Arguably the best black comedy about high school (other than, of course, actually being in high school), *Heathers* has everything: murder, suicide, bulimia, teenage sex, smoking, class warfare and the young Christian Slater with his patented ripped-off-from-Nicholson sneer. God, I love this film so. DVD extras include commentary from director Michael Lehmann and screenwriter Daniel Waters; a retrospective documentary, and the original ending from the screenplay.

Movie Score ●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●◖

THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF WALLACE AND GROMIT: SPECIAL EDITION
(Nick Park, director)

The uninitiated may wonder why animation fans go nuts for the adventures of a Claymation Englishman and his dog, but really, that's why they're the uninitiated. This DVD collects all three Wallace & Gromit adventures (two of which won Oscars) and tosses in commentary by creator Nick Park, behind-the-scenes features and a nice scrapbook. Beyond the pure fun of these shorts, claymation is a ton of work, none of it fobbed off to a computer. Park and his pals really put in the time for these, and it shows.

Movie Score ●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●

THE PRINCESS BRIDE: SPECIAL EDITION
(Cary Elwes, Andre the Giant)

Perhaps the only movie in the world that is beloved by both movie dweebs and that other type of person, let's see, what are they called—oh yeah: women. Credit screenwriter William Goldman, who adapts his own delightfully smart-ass fantasy book and knows how to play both audiences, and an eclectic cast that gets the joke and runs with it. DVD extras are pretty cool, including commentary from Goldman and director Rob Reiner, a documentary feature with interviews from the stars, and footage shot by Cary Elwes on the *Princess* set. That's right, medieval home movies! Wacky, baby.

Movie Score ●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●◖

STARTUP.COM

A documentary of the boom times of the Internet revolution, when any dumbass could put a "dot-com" at the back of his business and suddenly be a millionaire. *Startup* follows two of these whiz kids as they make it all the way to the top, and then fall all the way back down again. It's gripping in a slow-motion car crash sort of way. Yeah, the Internet era is over. Thank God. DVD features commentary and production notes.

Movie Score ●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●

THE TAILOR OF PANAMA: SPECIAL EDITION
(Pierce Brosnan, Geoffrey Rush)

Once upon a time they made movies without worrying if a 14-year-old with the IQ of an oxygen-starved ferret could follow the story, and *Tailor* is a throwback to that era: a bracingly nasty little flick about pointless political intrigue. One of the best things about it is the casting of Brosnan as an amoral, cynical British spy, rather not unlike James Bond would really be like, if he lived in the real world. Not a cheerful film, but certainly fun in an adult way. DVD extras: director commentary, a "conversation" with Brosnan and co-star Geoffrey Rush, and an alternate ending.

Movie Score ●●●◖
DVD Extras Score ●●●

TOTAL RECALL: SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION
(Arnold Schwarzenegger)

Ah-nold goes to Mars and foments a glorious worker's revolution! I never much liked this flick, which isn't nearly as smart as director Paul Verhoeven's *RoboCop*, or Arnold's *Terminator* films, but it certainly doesn't skimp on the special effects or exploding mutants. This edition of the DVD has commentary by Verhoeven and Arnold, documentaries on the making of the film and on the planet Mars, and conceptual art.

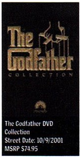
Movie Score ●●◖
DVD Extras Score ●●●◖

Clockwise: The Princess Bride, The Tailor of Panama, Blow, Driven, Heathers

Family Films

Everybody loves the Godfather saga (up to a point, that point being *Godfather III*), because it's the American saga. It's about trust and betrayal. It's about crime, business, opportunity and justice. It's about the importance of family, even if sometimes you just want to kill them (and do). It's about guns and explosions and money. It's about tradition and revolution. It's about cinema. It's about Las Vegas.

For all of this and more, the Godfather saga is arguably the signature work of American film—so much so that even today the first of these films looks fresh and vital, and there aren't many 30-year-old films from any era that have that sort of shelf life. Even *Godfather III*, justly noted as the least of this trio, has its very good points, primary among them Michael Corleone (Al Pacino) paying, Lear-like, for every hope and sin he ever had.



The Godfather DVD Collection
Street Date: 10/9/2001
MSRP $74.95

This five-disc DVD box set is a Godfather-philes dream come true: All three films—nine hours of viewing pleasure—each complete with audio commentary by director Francis Ford Coppola, plus an extra disc that contains a feature-length documentary on the movies, featurettes on the music (from Carmine Coppola, Francis' dad) and the famous cinematography, deleted scenes, Coppola's "notebooks" on the movies, and a raft of other goodies totaling about three hours of extras. (At 200 minutes, *Godfather II* is spread over two discs, in case you were wondering how three movies plus one extra disc added up to five discs.)

Godfather fans won't need to be convinced to get this package. For everyone else, well, look: It's one of the best examples of American cinema ever, and a damn fine example of how to stuff a DVD package with all the right goodies. What more do you *want* out of a box set?

DVD Releases

9/18/2001
Basic Instinct: SE
Basic Instinct: SE
Unrated [*Rrowr! -Ed.*]
Cape Fear (1962)
Cape Fear (1991)
Total Recall: Special
Limited Edition

9/25/2001
The Simpsons: Season 1

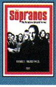
10/2/2001
Colors
Terminator: SE
The Mummy Returns

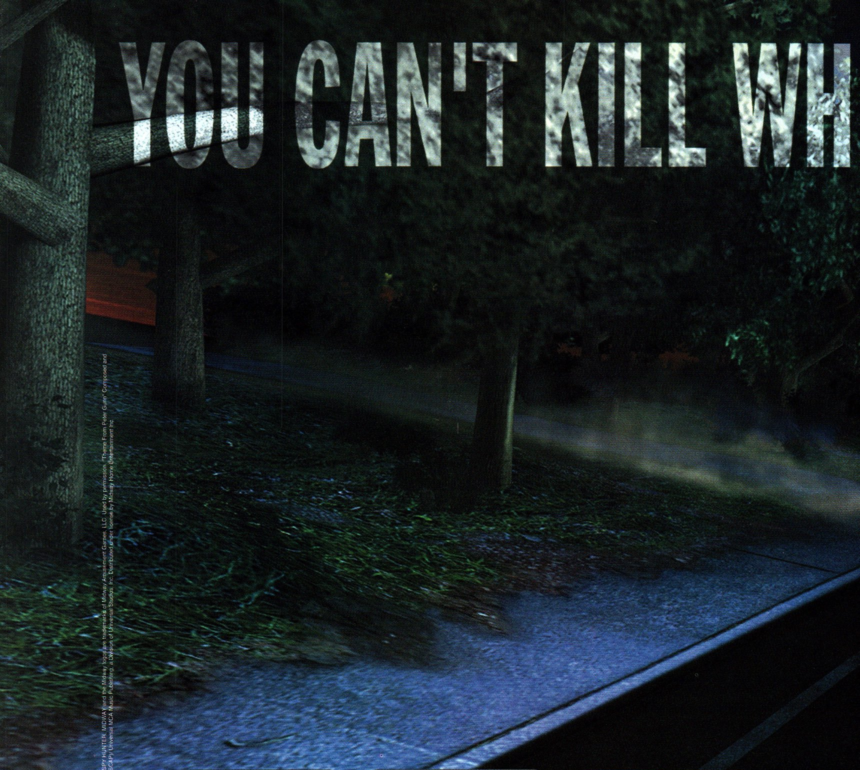
10/9/2001
Godfather Collection
Snow White and the
Seven Dwarfs

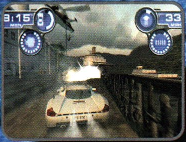
10/16/2001
Star Wars: Episode I—
The Phantom Menace

10/30/2001
MacArthur
Midway: CE
Swordfish

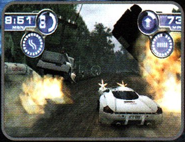
11/6/2001
Sopranos: 2nd Season



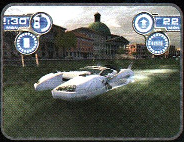




Command the explosive G-6155 Interceptor to escape and evade the relentless onslaught of enemy fire.



Blast through missions with an all-new intense arsenal of combat weaponry.



On-the-fly morphing transforms the Interceptor from lethal street machine to deadly, jet-powered marine vehicle.

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PlayStation®2

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Violence

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HOLLYWOOD BANTER

Knight Rider Returns

You'd think that after the disastrous *Knight Rider 2000* the whole thing would've been put to rest, but it seems that yet another cultural icon who helped define a generation along with *Star Wars* and *The A-Team* may be making a comeback. After kickstarting the whole "vehicle-based action series" trend back in the '80s (hands up—who remembers *Street Hawk*, *Automan*, *Blue Thunder* and *Airwolf*?), KIT will soon be back thanks to David Hasselhoff, who's clearly wondering what the hell he's going to do next now that *Baywatch* is over. According to British entertainment site Popcorn, Hasselhoff is touting what he calls an "absolutely big feature film" after signing a deal in August. "We're talking about doing it a little bit like *The Matrix*," he's reported to have said. We're not entirely sure what that means, but it's likely that lots of visual effects and trickery will be in evidence. One of the effects will be the resurrection of the late Edward Mulhare as Devon, who will be brought back from the dead as "a hologram." We can hardly wait. But will KIT still be a Pontiac? Surely his AI would be repelled by the ribbed, finned, scooped and generally ugly monstrosity that now passes as a Firebird.

Now all we need is for Infogrames to realize that they still hold the rights to the franchise after gobbling up Ocean Software years ago, and bring us a thinly veiled Test Drive derivative.

www.popcorn.com

Trek X Spoilers

Still no word on what the 10th *Trek* film will be called (although we've heard *Nemesis* touted by several sources), but details are emerging about what the plot will focus on. Although major story points are yet to be revealed, we've heard that Picard will be forced to come to terms with being an older man in Starfleet. Riker and Troi will finally get hitched (seemingly with scant regard for Troi's previous relationship with 24th-century lothario, Worf—who has already bedded two of the three major Trek hotties: Troi and Dax. Could we see him hooking up with Seven of Nine for the trifecta?), and Data will probably look a bit odd, since the actor who plays him is now much older. We've also heard that there will be definite "torch-passing" overtones, as we see a number of *Voyager* characters appearing in roles that are more than simple cameos. Janeway is lined up to appear now that she's an admiral, and Neelix and the Doctor are also rumored to make appearances.

At a recent *Trek* convention in the U.K., Patrick Stewart also dispelled rumors that both he and Brent Spiner (Data) wouldn't have agreed to star in the film unless their characters were killed off.

www.startrek.com

Lucy Lawless Is X-Rated

Having been killed for the umpteenth time as Xena, Lucy Lawless is set to return to the small screen in a multiepisode engagement for the new season of *The X-Files*, which will be back on TV in November. When quoted in *Variety*, executive producer Frank Spotnitz was predictably enthusiastic about the whole thing: "We're thrilled to have the opportunity to work with Lucy, whose work we've admired for a long time," he gushed. Really? There we were, thinking they'd hire someone whose work they thought sucked. "We think we've found an interesting and unexpected way to have her join the family," he continues—which is good, because we'd hate it if they found a boring and predictable way of bringing her in.

www.variety.com

Clones Attack

You probably know this by now, but in case you've not been paying attention to your entertainment news, the title of *Star Wars: Episode 2* has been confirmed as *Attack of the Clones* [insert deafening silence here]. According to the press release from Lucasfilm, "Ten years after the events of *The Phantom Menace*, not only has the galaxy undergone significant change, but so have our familiar heroes Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor), Padmé Amidala (Natalie Portman) and Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen) as they are thrown together again for the first time since the Trade Federation invasion of Naboo. Anakin has grown into the accomplished Jedi apprentice of Obi-Wan, who himself has transitioned from student to teacher. The two Jedi are assigned to protect Padmé, whose life is threatened by a faction of political separatists. As relationships form and powerful forces collide, these heroes face choices that will impact not only their own fates, but the destiny of the Republic." So now you know.

www.starwars.com

Farscape Movie?

SciFi Channel fave *Farscape* is already one of the most popular genre shows ever, and seems to be getting bigger and better with every episode. At Comic-Con in San Diego last month, series creator Rockne S. O'Bannon revealed some interesting tidbits to *Cinescape*. "There's been talks [of a *Farscape* movie] from the very beginning," he says. "It's been a passion of Brian Henson to make a feature out of the project. Of course, the difficulty initially was just getting the series made. Now we're having more serious conversations about a movie, but it's an issue of where to fit it in the production," he explains. "Creating a movie based on a television series that's still on the air is really tough to do because where do you put it? [Chris] Carter did it with *The X-Files* by essentially designing a season that led up to the movie....I don't know how successful that was—it gives the movie a short shelf life, I feel, as opposed to being a stand-alone film. However, in the case of our show, you have characters who were on the show in the beginning, but aren't there now. We have new characters that have come in, so where do you place it? We're in an arc in the series right now...it's a toughie."

www.cinescape.com
www.farscape.com

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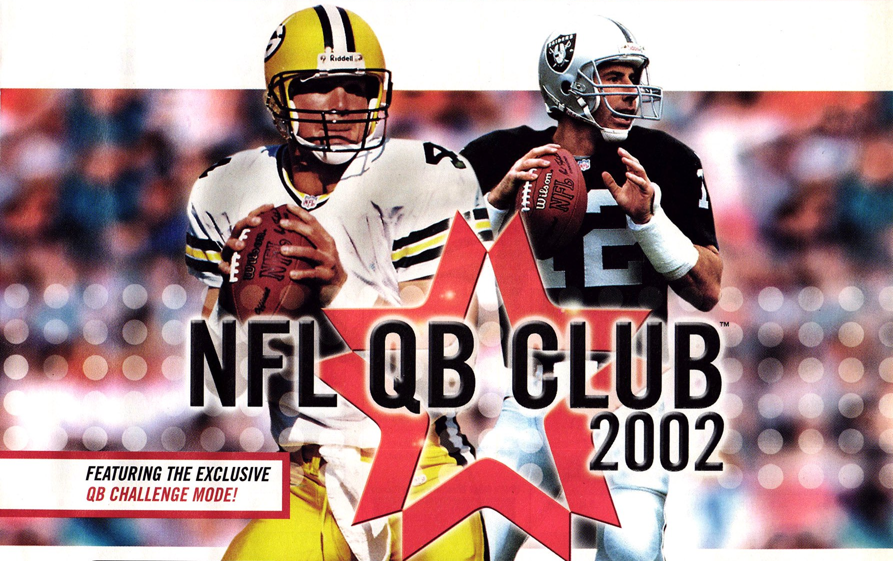

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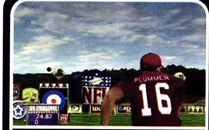
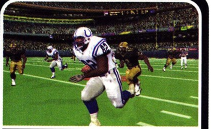
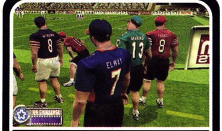


Exclusive Challenge Mode, Featuring 4 Head To Head Events



True-To-Life TV Style Presentation And Play-By-Play From Kevin Harlan And Bill Maas



Unlock Retired Greats Like John Elway, Dan Marino And Steve Young

PlayStation®2 PLAYERS INC Q.B.CLUB NFL EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB NINTENDO GAMECUBE

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TOP 10 CHARTS

PS2 Top 10

If you asked us last year what was going to be at the top of the sales chart this month, we would have had the right answer. The world is gobbling up GT3, and we couldn't be happier. As for the other games on the Top 10: excellent as well.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
1	—	Gran Turismo 3: A-spec *Sony CEA*	●●●●●

What's this? Gran Turismo 3 at the top of the sales charts. This won't last. It can't last! Obviously, we're being facetious. GT3 is the type of groundbreaking game that defines a system early in its lifecycle. A five out of five? This game deserves a six. Not to mention it has fast cars and faster cars. If you're one of the few who hasn't bought it, get out of your wicker patio chair and go buy it now.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
2	—	NBA Street *EA Big*	●●●●●
3	—	Twisted Metal: Black *Sony CEA*	●●●●●
4	—	MX 2002 f/ Ricky Carmichael *THQ*	●●●●

Who doesn't love motocross? If you're having trouble with MX 2002, flip over to Top Secrets for a little friendly guidance.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
5	—	NASCAR Heat 2002 *Infogrames*	●●●●
6	2	Red Faction *THQ*	●●●●●
7	1	Dark Cloud *Sony CEA*	●●●●◖
8	4	ATV Offroad Fury *Sony CEA*	●●●●
9	7	Tekken Tag Tournament *Namco*	●●●●◖
10	8	Midnight Club *Rockstar*	●●●●

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, mid-July 2001. Call them at 516.625.2481 for questions about this list. No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Dreamcast) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions written by the OPM staff.

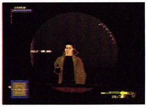
OPM's Most Wanted PS2 Games

	Title	Publisher
1	Ico	*Sony CEA*
2	Silent Hill 2	*Konami*
3	Grand Theft Auto III	*Rockstar*
4	Okage: Shadow King	*Sony CEA*
5	Metal Gear Solid 2	*Konami*
6	SSX: Tricky	*EA Big*
7	Final Fantasy X	*Square EA*
8	Maximo	*Capcom*
9	Tony Hawk 3	*Activision*
10	Devil May Cry	*Capcom*

Japan's Top 10 PS2 and PS one Games

	Title	Publisher
1	Final Fantasy X (2)	*Square*
2	Gran Turismo 3 (2)	*Sony CEJ*
3	Ka (Mosquito) (2)	*Sony CEJ*
4	Jikkyo Baseball 2001 (1)	*Konami*
5	Ape Escape 2001 (2)	*Sony CEJ*
6	One Piece Grand Battle (1)	*Bandai*
7	Pachinko Station V2 (2)	*Sunsoft*
8	Hot Shots Golf 2 (1)	*Sony CEJ*
9	Shoubushi Densetsu (2)	*Athena*
10	Soccer Eleven 5 (2)	*Konami*

OPM's Most Wanted PS one Games



	Title	Publisher
1	Syphon Filter 3	*Sony CEA*
2	Castlevania Chronicles	*Konami*
3	Spider-Man 2	*Activision*
4	Hoshigami	*Atlus*
5	X-Men: Mutant Acad. 2	*Activision*
6	Dragon Warrior VII	*Enix*
7	T. Metal: Small Brawl	*Sony CEA*
8	Mega Man X6	*Capcom*
9	Tony Hawk 3	*Activision*
10	E.T.	*NewKidCo*

Top 10 Selling Games, All Systems

	Title	Publisher
1	Gran Turismo 3 (PS2)	*Sony CEA*
2	NBA Street (PS2)	*EA Big*
3	Super Mario Adv. (GBA)	*Nintendo*
4	Sonic Adventure 2 (DC)	*Sega*
5	TM: Black (PS2)	*Sony CEA*
6	FF Chronicles (PS one)	*Square EA*
7	Tony Hawk 2 (GBA)	*Activision*
8	Pokémon: Gold (GBC)	*Nintendo*
9	Zelda: Seasons (GBC)	*Nintendo*
10	Pokémon: Silver (GBC)	*Nintendo*

PS one Top 10

The PS one Top 10 continues to fluctuate at a diabolic rate. Last month's No. 1, Mat Hoffman, fell completely off the chart. And this month's No. 1 shot right into the top spot. We're still wondering how Frogger hopped up to No. 3, though. Feel free to tell us.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
1	—	Final Fantasy Chronicles *Square EA*	●●●●

We thought Chronicles was retro gaming at its finest, and apparently you all agree. Combining two RPG classics—Final Fantasy IV (or FFII, as it was originally released here for the Super NES) and Chrono Trigger—Chronicles has what it takes to steal away hours of your time. But with some brilliant PS2 RPGs on the horizon, will Chronicles be able to hold onto the top spot for very long?

Att.
Comb
Item
Att.
Comb
Item
Crono
Marle
Lucca
HP MP
262:36
228:40
250:40

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
2	2	Gran Turismo 2 *Sony CEA*	●●●●●
3	—	Frogger *Acclaim*	●●◖

Frogger has "leapfrogged" all other PS one games and landed at No. 3. We were so happy we "jumped" for joy. No, we didn't.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
4	2	Spec Ops: Ranger Elite *Take 2 Interactive*	●
5	4	ATV Quad Power Racing *Acclaim*	●
6	7	Blue's Clues: Blues Big Musical *THQ*	●●●
7	—	NBA Live 2001 *EA Sports*	●●●●
8	6	Spec Ops *Take 2 Interactive*	●
9	—	Tomb Raider: Last Revelation *Eidos*	●●●●
10	—	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 *Activision*	●●●●●

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, mid-July 2001. Call them at 516.625.2481 for questions about this list. No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Dreamcast) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions written by the OPM staff.

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TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Violence

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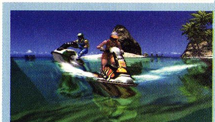
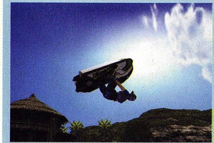
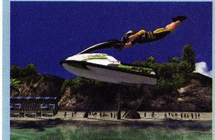
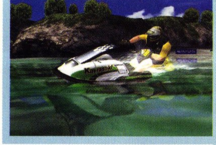






3/8
POSITION
0/2
LAP
TOTAL TIME
LAP TIME
SPEED
45



WAVE RALLY

JET SKI watercraft Kawasaki

Kawasaki

JETPILOT

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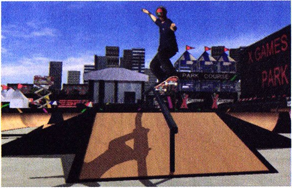
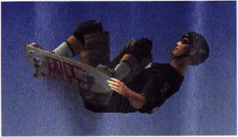
DETAILS. DETAILS.

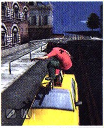
11 NUMBER OF RAMPS ON THE X GAMES STREET COURSE.



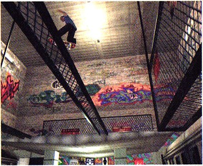
8,460 NUMBER OF BOARD SET-UP COMBINATIONS AVAILABLE.



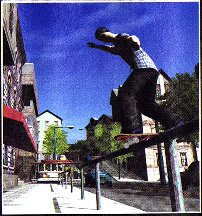
19 NUMBER OF KICKFLIP COMBINATIONS



1,000 POINT VALUE FOR GRINDING ACROSS A SUBWAY STATION.



9 NUMBER OF LOCATIONS TO SKATE AND COMPETE IN.



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PlayStation®2

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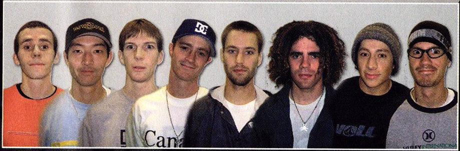
DETAILS.

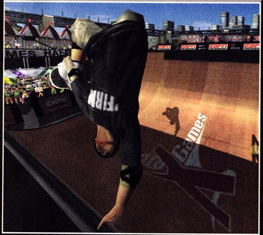
KONAMI®

8 NUMBER OF PRO'S YOU CAN PLAY AS.
RICK MCCRANK, LINCOLN UEDA, KERRY GETZ, COLIN MCKAY,
CHRIS SENN, CHAD FERNANDEZ, CARLOS DE ANDRADE, BOB BURNQUIST

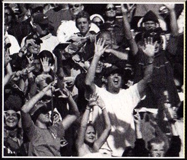


2,009 NUMBER OF POLYGONS USED TO MODEL BOB BURNQUIST.

2.4 Billion TOTAL NUMBER OF TRICK COMBINATIONS.



201,126 NUMBER OF ATTENDEES AT THE 2000 X GAMES IN SAN FRANCISCO.



BRYCE KANIGHTS

levels from the X Games to the decks of a passenger liner with hidden challenges and secret areas. With ESPN X Games Skateboarding, it's the details that count.

X Games skateboarding

ESPN the games

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MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Blood and Gore
Violence
R.P.D.
S.T.A.R.S.
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RESIDENT EVIL
CODE: Veronica X

CAPCOM PlayStation®2

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Coming Soon

September		
Arctic Thunder	Midway	Racing
BASS Strike	THQ	Fishing
Capcom vs. SNK 2	Capcom	Fighting
Commandos 2	Eidos	Strategy
F1 2002	EA Sports	Racing
Ico	Sony CEA	Adv.
Kessen II	Koei	Strategy
Lotus Challenge	Interplay	Racing
Monster Rancher 3	Tecmo	RPG
NASCAR Thunder 2002	EA Sports	Racing
NHL 2002	EA Sports	Sports
NHL Hitz 20-02	Midway	Sports
Okage: Shadow King	Sony CEA	RPG
Portal Runner	3DO	Action
Project Eden	Eidos	Adv.
RLH	Interplay	Adv.
Silent Scope 2	Konami	Shooter
Silent Hill 2	Konami	Adv.
Soul Reaver 2	Eidos	Adv.
Spy Hunter	Midway	Action
Thunderstrike: Op. Phoenix	Eidos	Action
Time Crisis II	Namco	Shooter
Victorious Boxers	Empire	Sports
Yanya Caballista: City Skater	Koei	Action
October		
18 Wheeler	Acclaim	Racing
Batman: Vengeance	Ubi Soft	Action
Casper: Spirit Dimensions	TDK	Action
Conflict Zone	Ubi Soft	Strategy
Driven	bam!	Racing
ESPN NFL Prime Time	Konami	Sports
Evil Twin	Ubi Soft	Adv.
Giants: Citizen Kabuto	Interplay	Adv.
Grand Theft Auto III	Rockstar	Action
Half-Life	Sierra	FPS
Harvest Moon: Save/Hom'land	Natsume	RPG
Hidden Invasion	Conspiracy	Action
Hot Shots Golf 3	Sony CEA	Sports
Kinetica	Sony CEA	Racing
Maximo	Capcom	Action
Minigolf Maniacs	Sierra	Sports
MS Gundam: Zeonic Front	Bandai	Strategy
The Mummy Returns	Universal	Action
NFL 2K2	Sega	Sports
NFL GameDay 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Shaun Palmer Snowboarder	Activision	X-Sports
Smuggler's Run 2	Rockstar	Action
SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs	Sony CEA	Action
Splashdown	Infogrames	Racing
Sunny Garcia Surfing	Ubi Soft	X-Sports
Supercar Street Challenge	Activision	Racing
Tarzan Untamed	Ubi Soft	Action
Top Gun: Combat Zone	Titus	Flight Sim
Tribes 2	Sierra	Action
Wave Rally	Eidos	Racing
WWF SmackDown! Just...	THQ	Wrestling
November		
Ace Combat 04	Namco	Action
Aliens: Colonial Marines	Fox Int.	Action
Baldur's Gate: DA	Interplay	RPG
Crash Bandicoot: TWoC	TBA	Action
Dark Summit	THQ	X-Sports
Deus Ex	Eidos	FPS/RPG
Devil May Cry	Capcom	Adv.
Downforce	Titus	Racing
Drakan: The Ancients' Gate	Sony CEA	Adv.
E.O.E.: Eve of Extinction	Eidos	Action
ESPN Nat'l Hockey Night	Konami	Sports
ESPN NBA 2Night 2002	Konami	Sports
ESPN Winter Sports 2002	Konami	Sports
FIFA 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Frequency	Sony CEA	Puzzle
Frogger: The Great Quest	Konami	Action
Gitaroo Man	Koei	Action
H2Overdrive	Crave	Racing
Herdy Gerdy	Eidos	Action
Jade Cocoon 2	Ubi Soft	RPG
James Bond 007 in...AUF	EA Games	FPS
Jeremy McGrath's SuperX	Acclaim	Racing
Jurassic Park: Survival	Universal	Action
The Legend of Alon D'ar	Ubi Soft	RPG
Legends of Wrestling	Acclaim	Wrestling
Metal Gear Solid 2: SoL	Konami	Adv.
NBA 2K2	Sega	Sports
NBA Live 2002	EA Sports	Sports
NBA ShootOut 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
NCAA Final Four 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
NCAA GameBreaker 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
NFL Blitz 20-02	Midway	Sports
NHL FaceOff 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Pirates of Skull Cove	EA Games	Action
Police 911	Konami	Shooter
Pryzm: The Dark Unicorn	TDK	RPG
Rubu Tribe	Interplay	Action
The Simpsons: Road Rage	EA Games	Action
SSX Tricky	EA Sports	X-Sports
Star Trek: Shattered Universe	Interplay	Action
Tetris Worlds	THQ	Puzzle
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Activision	X-Sports
USHRA Monster Jam	Ubi Soft	Racing
Vampire Night	Namco	Shooter
December		
Jak and Daxter: TPL	Sony CEA	Action
Jonny Mosely Mad Trix	3DO	X-Sports
Rayman Arena	Ubi Soft	Action

NFL 2K2

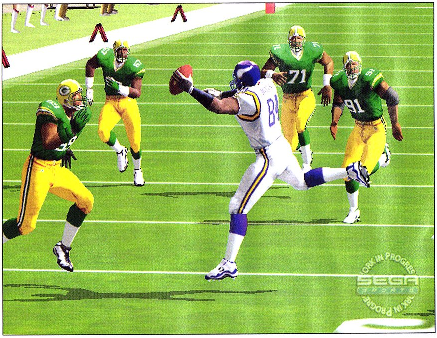
An exclusive first look at Madden's real challenger

Football is all about competition. Smack a guy harder than he smacks you. It's been disappointing that this gladiator mentality hasn't translated into a virtual war between EA Sports' Madden and, well, anyone. In '98, maybe GameDay made a stand, but it stayed up about as long as Custer. Finally, this **November**, the face of video game football competition changes courtesy of **Sega Sports** with NFL 2K2. We were lucky enough to drop in on **Visual Concepts**, the braintrust behind the entire 2K series (all are planned to trickle onto the PS2), and found that NFL 2K2 is going to be so detailed, so obsessively cared-for, that it has a shot at dethroning Madden as the PS2 Super Bowl champ.

The attention to detail and subtle nuances make NFL 2K2 a special game. Some details you'll notice right away, but the good stuff comes after hours of gameplay. Get this: VC hired a professional football director who was responsible for calling the shots on three Fox Super Bowls and now NASCAR. Coming in to make sure the right cameras are being used at the right time, that stats on the screen were easily digestable, etc., he's made it feel like you're watching football on television. There are deep playbooks, attentive announcers and corporate sponsors in stadiums. With 2K2, subtlety is king.

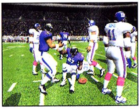
And you'll see a much faster version of football than Madden, when it comes to gameplay. Plus, the ultimate Visual Concepts model is to give the control to the gamer. When a QB throws a deep ball, for instance, it's best to take control of your receiver if you want to make a sharp cut and turn it into a big play. Another gameplay nuance is what Raiders running back Tyrone Wheatley refers to as "getting skinny." VC wants to avoid having running backs inexplicably "bounce" off linemen when trying to get through a tight hole, so it's implemented one of Wheatley's mo-cap moves in which he turns his body sideways to get through a tight hole. You know...getting skinny. Part of America's new football lexicon.

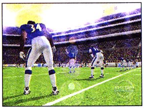
Overall, for a first look, 2K2 shows fantastic potential. Will it beat Madden? Tough to say. Does it have a chance? Definitely. We'll keep the updates coming.

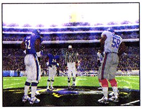


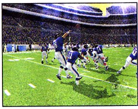
History Made Fun

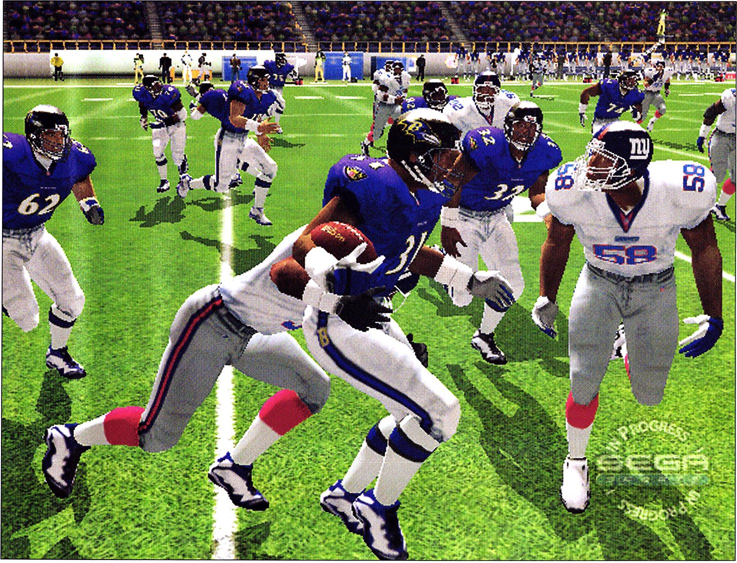
With the use of actors instead of real broadcasters, the entire 2K library has always featured great announcing. In 2K2, the game's "history database" tracks every stat so that it can be conjured up at any time. In other words, if you break off a 40-yard TD run in the first quarter, you're going to hear it mentioned in the fourth. It feels like real announcers reside within your PS2.











Talking 2K2 with Visual Concepts' Thomas

We had a *Sopranos*-style sitdown with Visual Concepts president Greg Thomas and Jeff Thomas, NFL 2K2 project manager. Here's what they had to say:

Why is NFL 2K2 *the* football game to buy?
Greg: It's the control and the gameplay for us. Always has been, always will be. It's a different kind of game than Madden and GameDay. We spend more attention to detail, especially considering gameplay, AI and control.

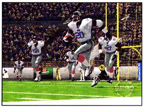
Is 2K2 more arcadey, more sim or in between?
Greg: It's definitely in the middle. It's definitely a sim. We are so realistic. And it feels like an arcade game since the control is so tight.
Jeff: You really feel like you're in control. You won't feel like you're steering a boat around. That's always been the key for us.

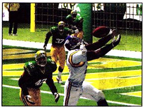
What were some difficulties in bringing the NFL 2K series over from the Dreamcast?
Greg: It was about making a new game, not porting what we had from the DC. Of course we brought over the things we did right, but we redid a lot of things. We redid the field, the stadiums, the players. Mostly, we brought over animations we liked, but still there are 25 percent new ones.

What do 2K fans have to look forward to with the new 2K2?
Greg: The differences between 2K and 2K1 were huge. People were blown away. Our goal with 2K2 is to make the best football game in the world.

Are you frustrated NFL 2K2 won't be online?
Greg: It's hugely disappointing. We'll be online next year, but we really, really wanted to do it this year.

How much better looking is the PS2 game going to be than the DC version?
Jeff: It's significant. There's 50-75 percent more polygons. You put those in the right places, [and] it makes a big difference to how the game looks. With the facial animations, this amount of polys makes these guys look real.





Playbook Plus

You want depth in your playbook? NFL 2K2 is the place to look. Why? You can run any play out of any formation. You might ask why that's important. We did. Here's an example: Last season, the Rams were known to run the exact same play out of six different formations. That way the defense never knew the same play was coming time and again. It basically offers the gamer the ultimate, unlimited playbook. Infinity is always hard to defend.

Preorder Watch

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Amazon.com	Y	$49.99	10/26/01
BestBuy.com	N	N/A	N/A
Buy.com	Y	$47.99	10/24/01
EBgames.com	Y	$49.99	9/28/01
GameStop.com	Y	$49.99	10/23/01

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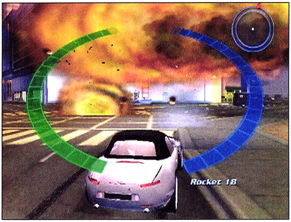
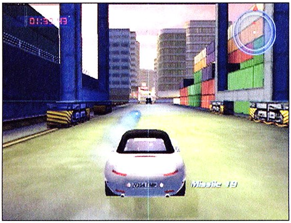
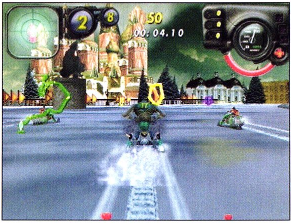




James Bond 007 in... Agent Under Fire

We've already shown you a bit of what to expect from the primary, first-person shooter mode of **EA Games'** original James Bond story, based on the Quake III engine. But, seeing as how action-packed driving missions compose another good chunk of the game (the PS2's 007 Racing was canceled to throw them in there), we figured we owed you a couple driving shots, too. Check it out in **November**.



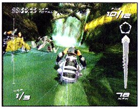
Arctic Thunder

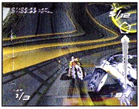
We've had a few goes at the newest of **Midway**'s arcade-turned-PS2 games, due out **this month**, and it seems as though one word sums up Arctic Thunder best: speed. Lots and lots of speed. As you zoom through multibranching tracks like Blizzard in D.C. and Chernobyl Meltdown (pictured), you've also got to keep tabs on your competitors, attempting to knock them off their snowmobiles with everything from projectile weapons to bare fists. And they do it right back.

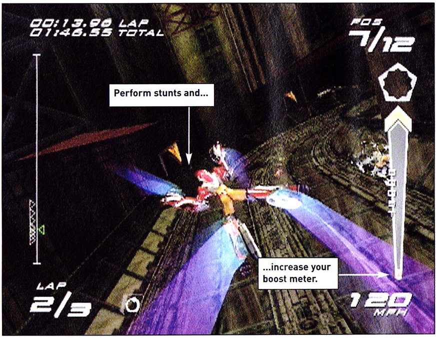
Kinetica

A racing game with booty

We get the same question all the time: "Hey, *OPM*!" you cry. "When are we gonna see a futuristic racing game with lots and lots of ass?!" Relax, faithful readers. The time is nigh. With Kinetica, **Sony CEA** fuses thrill seekers of the future with special racing exoskeletons known as Kinetic Skins, giving them the chance to race through six high-speed environments, ranging from a space station to Mayan ruins. With a wheel at the end of each limb, the competitors assume their racing positions—all wheels to the ground, derrières pointed skyward. Once the race begins, you soon notice the multitude of routes available. Aside from just a choice of going left or right, you often have the option of heading downward or up high, as you scale the sides of walls. You even have stunts to perform, filling up your boost meter (and keeping that nice rump healthy all the while).

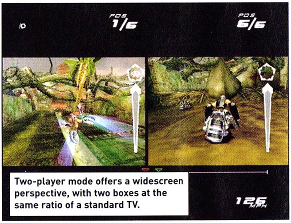






Perform stunts and...

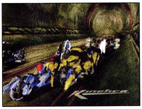
...increase your boost meter.



Two-player mode offers a widescreen perspective, with two boxes at the same ratio of a standard TV.

Bottoms Up!

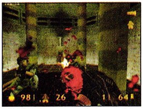
As hard as it may be to believe initially, all of the women racers in this November release seem to prefer the thong as the only garment adorning the area between their boots and their Kinetic Skin up top. Why would this be, you ask? The answer is simple: aerodynamics. Even though it's only a few extra square inches, that little bit of clothing does add a few ounces of weight to slow them down, doesn't it? We're sure that's the reason. Has to be, right?

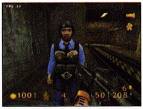


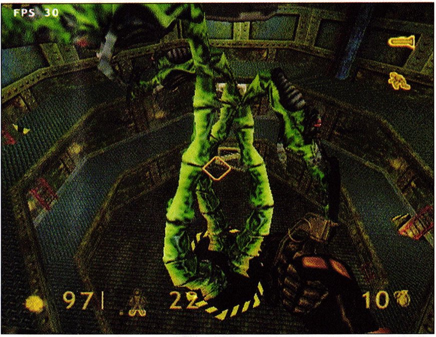
Half-Life

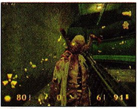
It's all in there...and then some

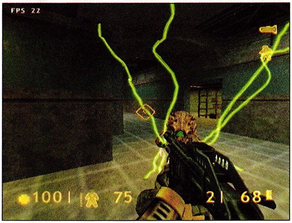
It's one of the most critically acclaimed PC games of all time. And in **October** PS2 owners will get a chance to see what all the fuss is about. We've finally had a chance to put in some serious hands-on time with the single-player story (the game will also include a PS2-exclusive two-player cooperative mission called Decay, which **Sierra** is still keeping a lid on), and we're happy to report that the game seems to have made the transition to PS2 admirably. Everything found in the original is present, and the character models, from enemies to allies, are even more detailed than before. The only concern at this point is the framerate: Though this version often reaches 60 fps, when too many enemies are on screen the game deals up some serious slowdown. But we're betting this important issue will be fixed before the release.

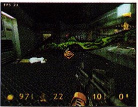






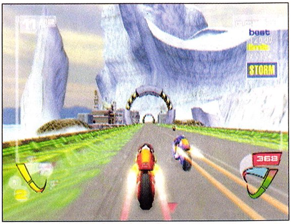


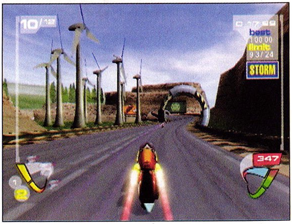




Bravo!

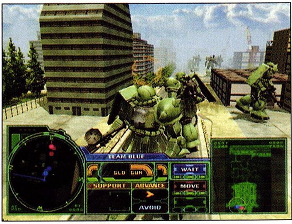
Want to know how well Half-Life was received in the PC community? Get this: In addition to earning accolades at the Computer Game Developer Spotlight Awards and The Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences Awards, it was named Game of the Year or the equivalent by over 50 publications worldwide, including *Computer Gaming World*, *PC Gamer*, *Teen People* Online and Electric Playground.





Extreme G III

So, you think you know speed, champ? You don't know squat. But **Acclaim** is more than happy to give you a lesson when XGIII releases this **fall**. With 10 physically improbable tracks and 12 ridiculously fast bikes, XGIII's biggest strength could turn out to be its biggest fault: Could it be just *too* fast? After taking some hands-on time, we'll say this: It's certainly more challenging than more sedately paced arcade racers. An innovative shield/weapon system adds further mayhem.



Mobile Suit Gundam: Zeonic Front

The universe can be divided into two categories: frothing fans of all things Gundam—and the rest of the world, who couldn't care less. This **fall**, **Bandai** hopes to bridge that seemingly insurmountable gap with the release of Zeonic Front. A real-time squadron-based action-strategy game, Zeonic Front features sharp graphics and plenty of deep, open-ended missions. Even though none of us are hardcore Gundam fans, what we've played has definitely piqued our interest.

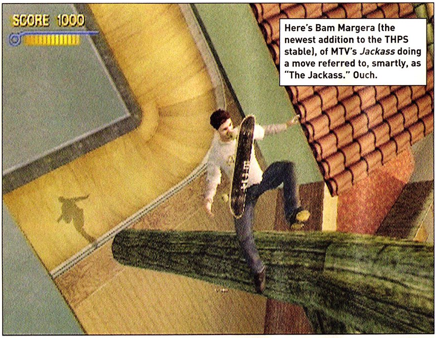
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

The sweet smear of bail blood

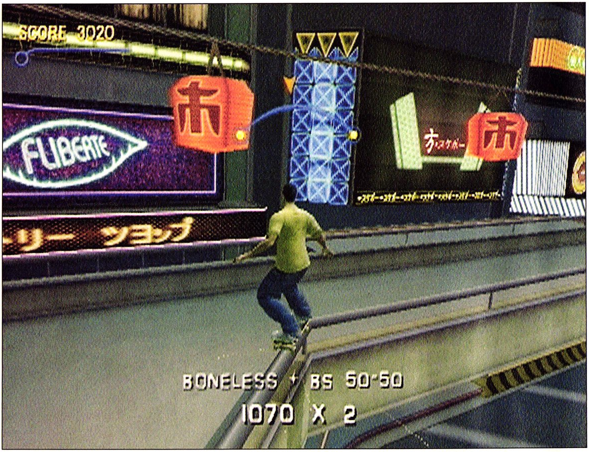
It boggles the mind that **Neversoft**, the developer of Tony Hawk, has managed to, once again, exceed our expectations so prodigiously. After the huge leap from THPS1 to its sequel, we figured the tank would run dry. How much closer could they crawl to brilliance? Now, with a playable of the game, we're getting the slightest taste, and the improvements play like a symphony. It's obvious that **Activision** has another winner on its hands.

With the PS2, ramped-up graphics are a given. But the size of the environments makes the lifelike skaters pale in technological and graphical comparison. After playing the Canada level for hours, we discovered a huge skatepark-style section that we had never seen before. The animations are knit together, too, like a fine wool sweater, and bailing is so harsh, the smear of blood makes you regret putting your skater in the position to splatter his O-positive all over the half-pipe.

The events in the game separate the old THPS from the new more than anything. In the Suburbs, you help a guy get into his locked haunted mansion. In L.A., you help the police catch a crook by triggering an earthquake. And those are just the early levels.

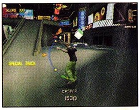


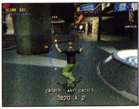
Here's Bam Margera (the newest addition to the THPS stable), of MTV's *Jackass* doing a move referred to, smartly, as "The Jackass." Ouch.

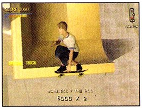


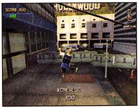
Mullen Moves

If you've seen a Rodney Mullen skate video, you'll be glad to know that his moves are now possible in THPS3 (below). If you haven't, imagine someone going from a manual to a casper to an anti-casper to a nose manual, without flaw. Sound complicated? It's not. In fact, you won't even need to ollie between the moves in THPS3 the way you had to in prior games. Rev up your Special Meter and you can go from move to move with ease.









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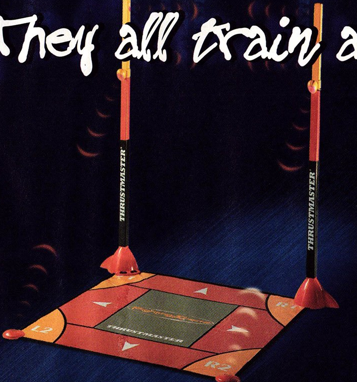
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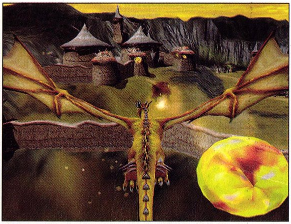
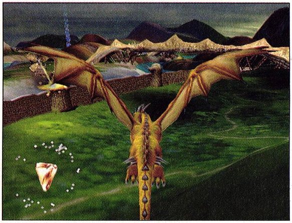
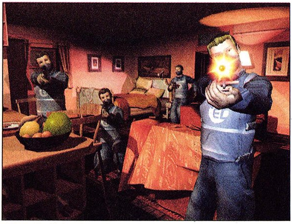




Dragon Rage

If this **fall** release looks suspiciously like Dragon Wars of Might and Magic to you (see June issue), there's a reason for that—**3DO** realized the lack of connection to its established franchise and wants to start a new one with Dragon Rage. We recently saw it in action, and it shows a lot of potential. The dragon you control throughout the game, Cael, has 32 unique attacks at his disposal, ranging from swooping down on Orcs to blasting them with breaths of fire or ice.



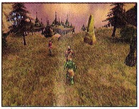
Endgame

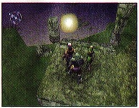
Remember how virtual reality was supposed to be the next big thing a few years ago? According to the plot of **spring**'s Endgame, it eventually lives up to the hype in the near future—only thing is, it can be deadly. Equipped with a light gun, you as Jade must save your boyfriend from a corrupt VR company called EuroDream. The cinematic story spans four virtual worlds and 16 real ones, your trigger finger kept occupied by what **Empire** boasts as sophisticated AI.

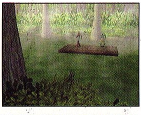
The Legend of Alon D'ar

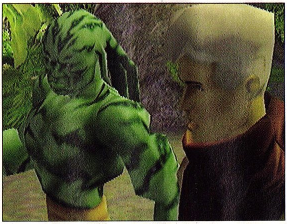
Fun for more than one

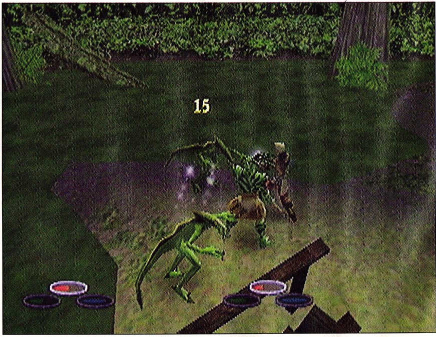
Playing through this innovative, visually breathtaking RPG just might be the best way to bide your time 'til Final Fantasy X hits next year. The story is standard sword-and-sorcery stuff (a young warrior seeks out the meaning of a mystical scar on his right hand), but the game's presentation is truly unique. How so? Battles play out in what **Ubi Soft** calls "phased real-time"—players retain complete control of their party members' movements, even though attacks are all turn-based. Want your strongest fighter to take on an enemy at the opposite end of the screen? Simply guide the warrior over to your desired target before it's his turn to strike. This design provides for an odd amalgam of play styles, but the end result is really quite solid: you get a direct sense of control that doesn't interfere with the game's strategic elements. Cooler still, a second player can join in the fun by taking responsibility for half the party. More than just a throwaway option, this opens the game up for a solid co-op experience (think Secret of Mana and you'll get the general idea). Get your Coke, potato chips and eye drops ready: Alon D'ar hits store shelves in **November**.

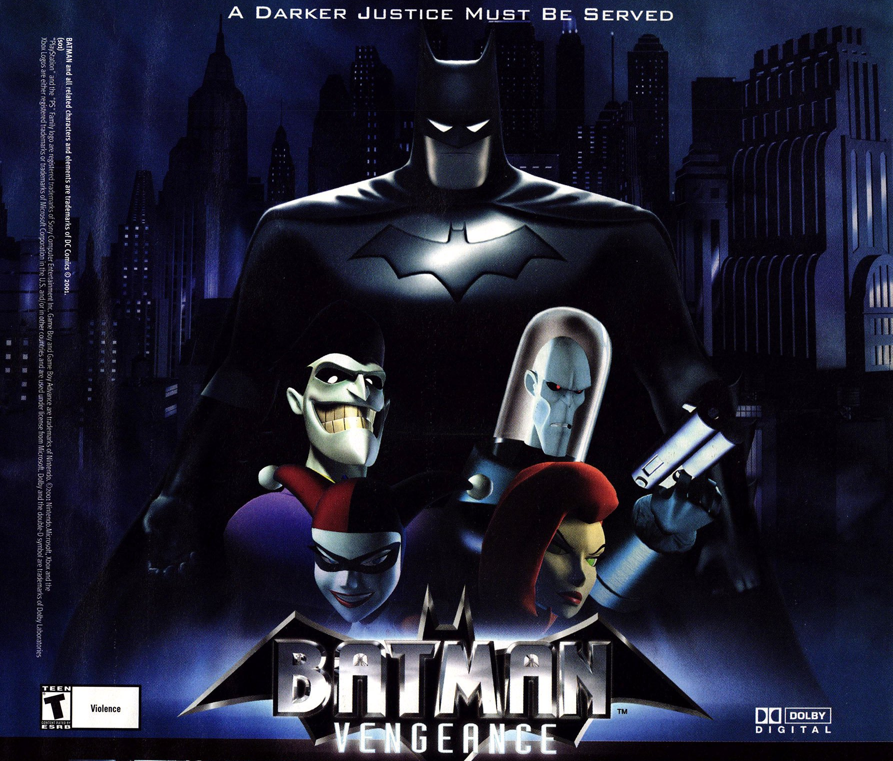








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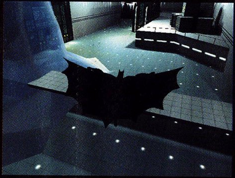

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PlayStation 2

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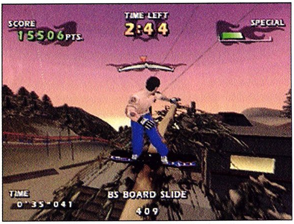
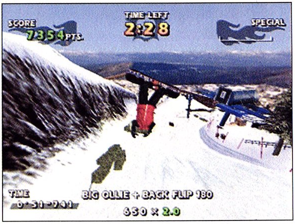
Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder

Not just Tony Hawk on a snowboard

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but don't think that **Activision**'s first snowboarding effort, due in **October**, is just Tony Hawk on a mountainside. And don't think it's trying to be SSX, either. "It's definitely similar gameplay-wise [to Tony Hawk]," says Mike Fletcher, producer at Activision. "The controls are the same, but it's a trick-based game. I would say that we've taken the best element out of Tony—the gameplay—but we've put it authentically into a snowboarding environment." As for SSX, which has dominated the snowboarding genre since the PS2 launched, keep in mind that Pro Snowboarder isn't a racing game. You'll cruise down 10 different mountains, including Nagano, Aspen and Squaw Valley, and do wily tricks off any number of objects. Meanwhile, the goals relate to those of THPS: knock down signs, grab a secret object, score big points. And if you miss something, you can't just plop your snowboard into reverse—snowmobiles set up along the path take you to the beginning of the course instantaneously.





SCORE
24155 PTS.
TIME LEFT
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SCORE
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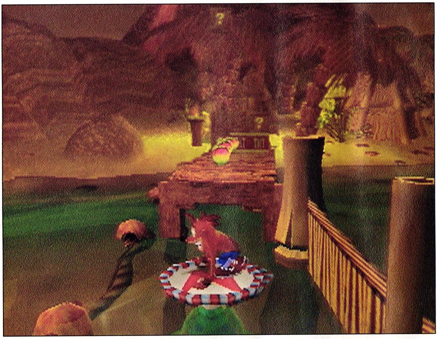
Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex

If it ain't broke...

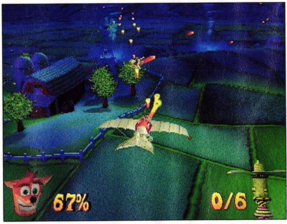
One of our first reactions upon booting up this first playable version of Crash's PS2 debut was this: The game doesn't look *that* much better than its PS one predecessors. Further scrutiny revealed plenty of subtle touches—like the slick framerate, the larger, more detailed characters and the gorgeous graphical effects, like the very convincing heat shimmer seen in the volcanic level pictured below. But the original games looked so good to begin with that it's not surprising the differences are subtle.

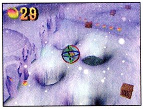
What *is* surprising, however, is that the fundamental gameplay remains equally unchanged. We knew that **Universal** wasn't planning to make a whole lot of alterations to the successful formula, but what changes there are seem to take great care not to stray far from the beaten path. Is that good news or bad news? Depends on whether you're the type who wants more of the same or one who wants to see new ground broken. You'll get to decide for yourself with the game's release in **November**.



Viva Variety

Like Crash 3, The Wrath of Cortex features a double handful of different play modes, such as a flying level (right), a submarine level and the intriguing Crash-in-a-ball level pictured below. The play mechanics in this section bear an unmistakable resemblance to Marble Madness. We doubt that's a coincidence, since Mark Cerny, who served as a consultant on all the Crash games (including this one), was the creator of the arcade classic.





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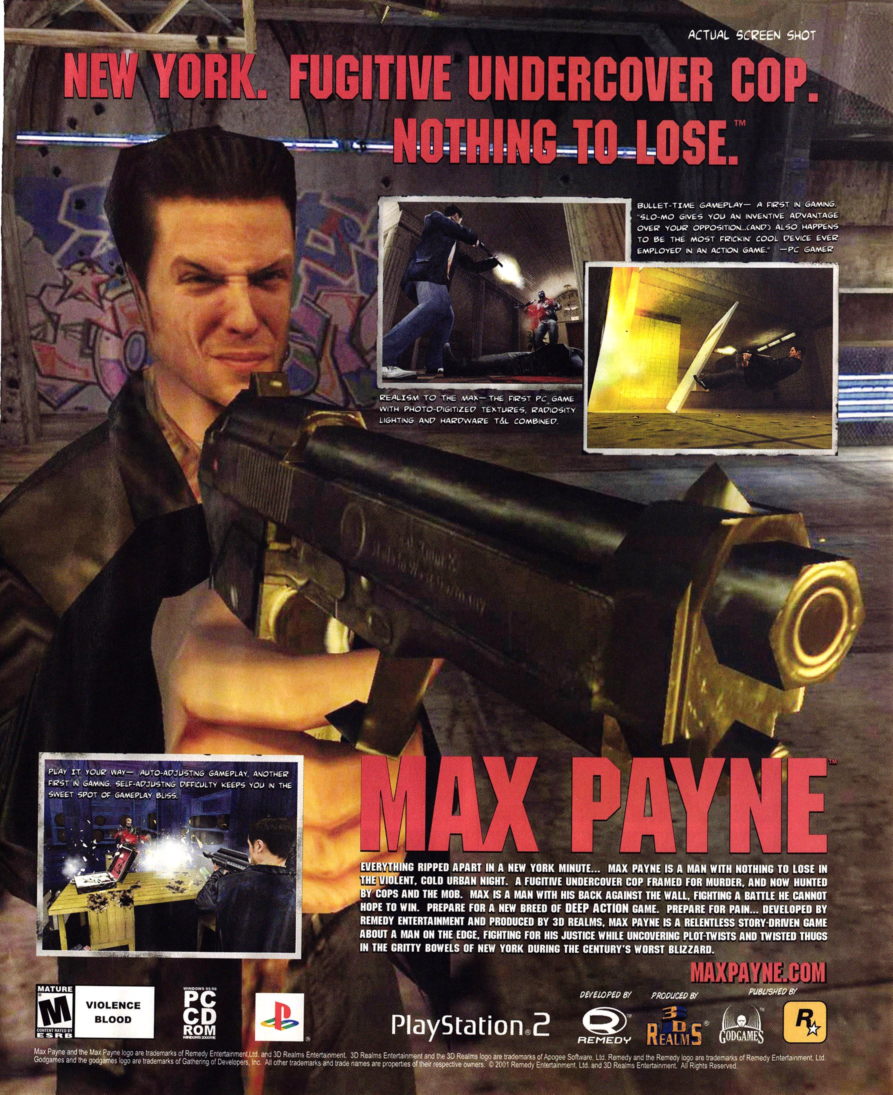

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Xenosaga

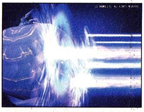
The saga is reborn on PS2

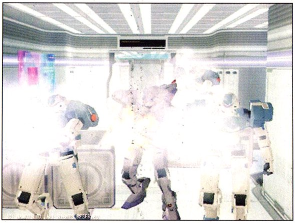
As we've covered in the past, Xenosaga serves as a prequel to Square's Xenogears, and is coming from new developer **Monolith Soft** (made up of former Xenogears staff members). But we've also recently learned that, while Xenosaga incorporates many of the elements from Xenogears, Monolith Soft has decided to make a few changes—to restart the series in a matter of speaking.

Coming in the form of six episodes (this game being the first, and further installments likely bringing the saga online), Xenosaga encompasses the beginning and end of the universe in the form of a sci-fi epic. The game's subtitle "Der Wille zur Macht," which translates to "Will to Power," is taken from the writings of 19th-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and basically hints at the main theme of this chapter: humans inflicting their will on others, and the struggle for power and control.

The story takes place in the future, after humans have abandoned Earth, and comes in during the time when we have discovered an infinite power source called Zohar. Interestingly, Monolith plans to keep Xenosaga's story elements very separate from the actual gameplay (unlike most RPGs these days). According to the team, players can better follow the narrative this way.

Published by **Namco**, Xenosaga hits Japan in December and should eventually make its way here sometime **next summer**.





Dark Summit

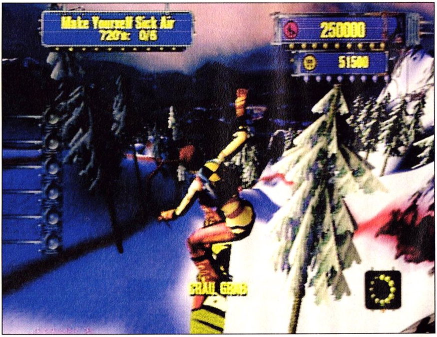
Conspiracy on the slopes

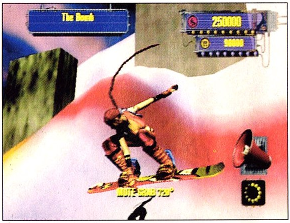
The PS2 snowboarding slopes may be owned by SSX, but that could all change this **November** with **THQ** and developer **Radical Entertainment**'s new mission-based mountain epic. We're getting tired of tricking down the hill just to cross the finish line, so Dark Summit's solid storyline, Tony Hawk-style control scheme, and massive mountain real estate have us flipping inverted 720s.

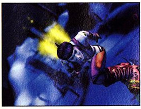
Radical has plenty of experience with snowboarding games, responsible for the ESPN and MTV branded titles, but don't be fooled into thinking Dark Summit is just another license to release downhill drivel. Most impressive is the vast, topographically detailed mountain, complete with two summits, three ski lifts, halfpipe, back-country regions and out-of-bounds areas—all interconnected for your boarding pleasure. (A final race from the summit to the base should take about 12-15 minutes to complete!) Freestyling is just as exciting as completing the 45 varied challenges and, even if a mission fails, you can continue to board the hill at your leisure, pulling tricks and brushing up on special moves.

Dark Summit's story buckles you into the bindings of a raucous redhead named Naya, determined to leave a mischievous mark on skier's paradise Mount Garrick. Archenemy Chief O'Leary, head of security, doles out orders to his ski patrol in an effort to keep boarders off the mountain. Many of Dark Summit's challenges revolve around O'Leary, his team of lackies, and a large conspiracy that Naya must unravel by completing various challenges, with the help of a boarder alliance composed of five hip riders that you can control once you've finished the game.

Graphically, Dark Summit is well on its way, boasting smooth framerates with multiple skiers on the hill, and real-time physics that show off sweet snowballing effects—even a full-scale avalanche that Naya must escape. The game is packed with replayability, including a two-player version that grants access to halfpipe competitions, downhill racing and even a "Smash Stuff" mode. Obviously, Dark Summit is sinking its board into more than just powder.







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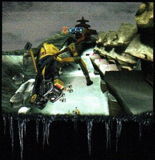
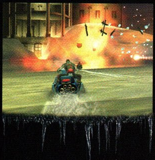
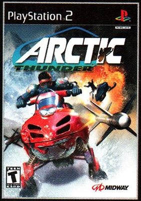


Hyper-realistic racing velocity and major air give new meaning to "breakneck speed."



Make 'em feel you with combat weapons like snow bombs, missiles, and The Atomic Snowball.



Sneak Preview @ www.arcticthunder.midway.com

ARCTIC THUNDER

PlayStation 2

XBOX

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Violence

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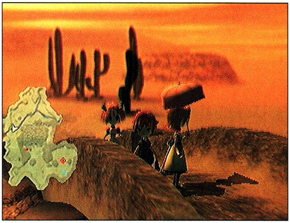
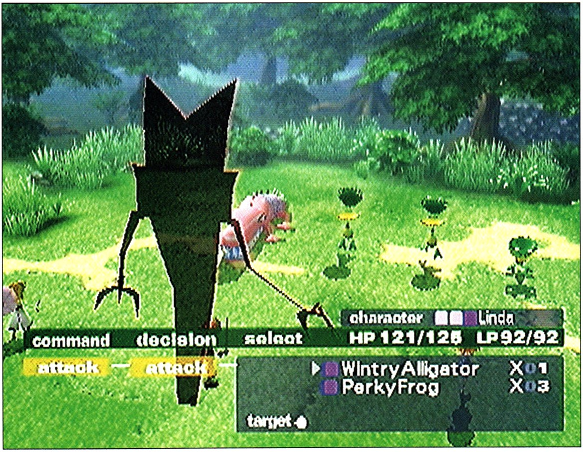
Okage: Shadow King

The perfect blend of comedy and tragedy

You might remember our first look at this **Sony** release back in June, when it was a Japan-only title known as The Devil and I. Or maybe you recall a glimpse of it from last month's demo disc. Either way, you probably marveled at the *Nightmare Before Christmas*-style character animations and overall look. But there's more to it than that: Okage is shaping up to be one of the year's best RPGs, period.

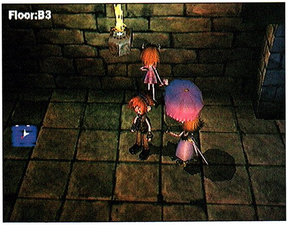
In a market flooded with poker-faced, ultra-serious adventure titles, this game really stands out with a refreshing mix of whimsical story and caustic black humor. The young protagonists in Okage's world speak in contemporary slang and harbor conventional fears and attitudes; they behave and sound like real teenagers. More than your typical noble heroes, they're also witty, insecure chatterboxes who have plenty of opportunities to trade insults and form crushes. Their quest hinges on the demands of Stan, "The King of All Evil." This sinister entity has made an eternal slave of Ari, a braggart more interested in scoring with the town hottie than submitting to the demands of his testy master. Of course, when push comes to shove, Ari follows orders and journeys out to eliminate a handful of powerful spirits vying for Stan's crown. The whole thing is as whacked-out and wonderful as it sounds. Play it **next month**.

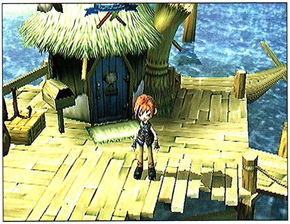


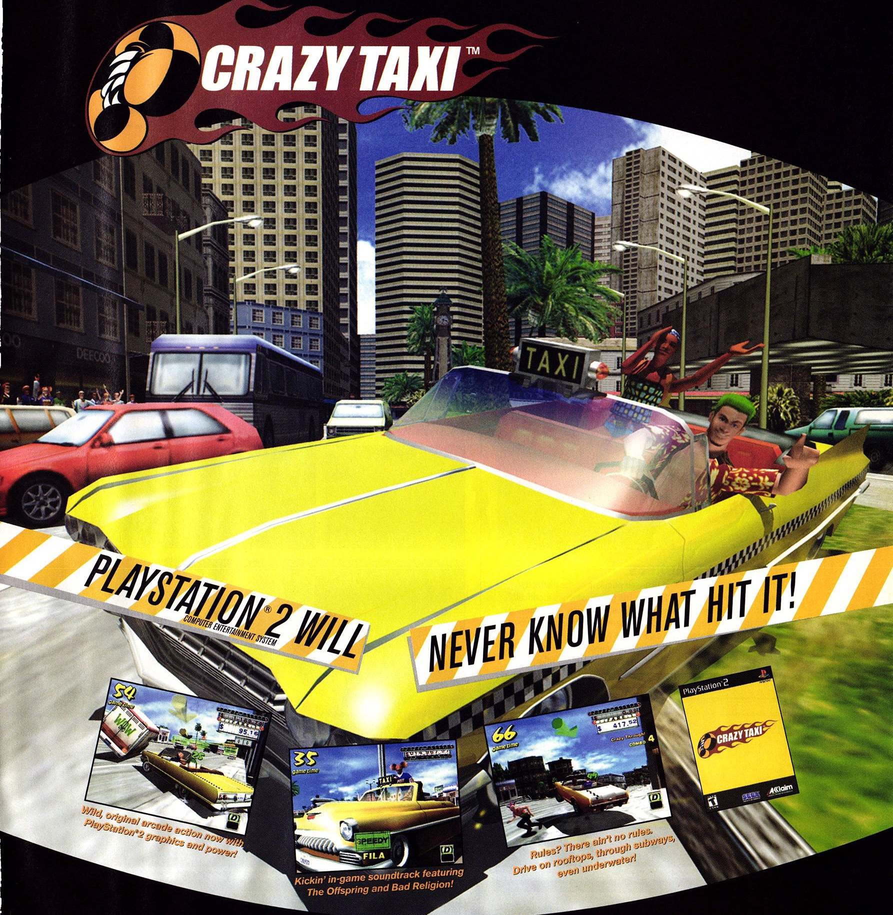


Cinematics

Since the release of Final Fantasy VII, glossy aesthetics have become an increasingly important element in high-end RPGs. While Okage fails to reach the graphics bar set by the vaunted Final Fantasy X, it's still a marvel in its own right, seamlessly combining beautiful cutscenes with in-game play (below). This provides for a cinematic sweep that further blurs the line between films and games. Okage isn't just entertainment, folks—it's art, fit to stand right next to *Shrek* or *A.I.*



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TEEN
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PlayStation 2

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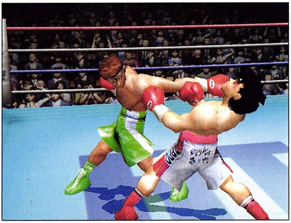
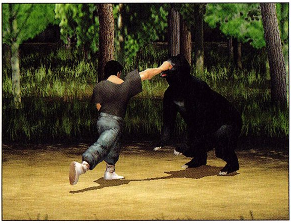
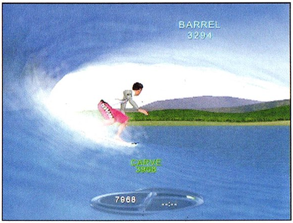




Victorious Boxers

Don't be put off by the lack of licensed pugilists or the distinctly Japanese look of Victorious Boxers. The game, which is a critically acclaimed hit in Japan, more than makes up for this "shortcoming" thanks to its fast, realistic and unique gameplay. When we got our gloves on **Empire Interactive**'s game, we were positively punch-drunk by the easy-to-play yet remarkably deep action. Even the non-sports gamers among us were itching for a shot at the title!



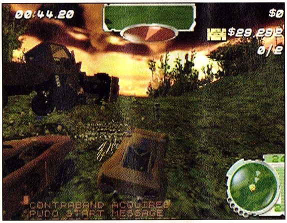
Sunny Garcia Surfing

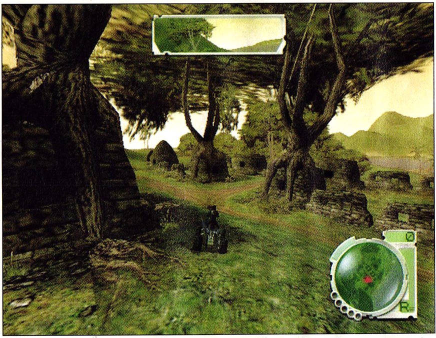
For years, Sunny Garcia has owned the waves. So it was only a matter of time before a publisher signed him on for its hot new surfing game. Enter **Ubi Soft** for this **November** release. The game also includes eight other world-class surfers, each with his or her own signature motion-captured moves. It features 12 locales ripe for hanging 10, as well, with waves ranging from insignificant to as high as 30 feet, all to the tunes of bands like MxPx and Sprung Monkey.

Smuggler's Run 2: Hostile Territory

Basically more of the same...but still cool as hell

Like Universal with Crash PS2, **Rockstar** knows not to fiddle too much with a successful formula. At least, that's the impression one gets from browsing through a playable version of Smuggler's Run 2. Like the original, SR2 features three enormous environments—one of which is a snowed-in reprise of a previous area—and mixes contraband-trafficking missions with the occasional offroad rally (new to this version are Driver-style chase-and-destroy missions). But despite superficial similarities, plenty of additions exist. For example, you now have to contend with weather—like the rain that pours down in the early Afghanistan missions, messing with the handling of the lighter vehicles. The levels, too, seem much more alive, with somewhat more realistic topography and lots of little touches like the flowers and bamboo trees in the Vietnam area. And to top it off, new vehicles like the half-track and the ATV present their own unique handling challenges. See if you've got what it takes in **October**.





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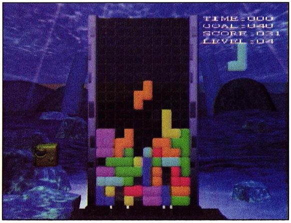
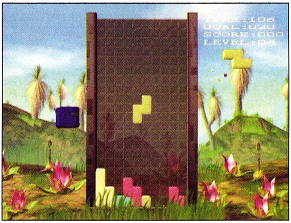
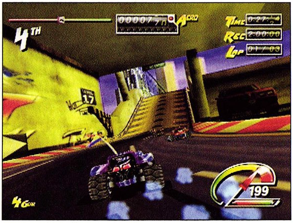




Tetris Worlds

The most popular puzzle game ever undergoes its next evolution on the PS2 this **November**, thanks to **THQ**. But like any new version of Tetris, Tetris Worlds has its own unique catch. In this case, you cruise the galaxy to seven different worlds, each with its own Tetris rules—everything from the classic style of play to versions you've probably never imagined. Better yet, the game's multiplayer mode allows you to demonstrate your Tetris supremacy four-player style.



Stunt GP

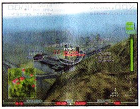
Why is it that most R/C racing games fail to capitalize on the very things that make R/C racing interesting? Maybe **Titus** can explain; they're releasing Stunt GP in the **first quarter of 2002**, and so far the game looks like more of the same. To be fair, Stunt GP does feature a "stunt bowl" mode, which at least includes a more authentic R.C. Pro-Am-style perspective. But beyond that, to be honest, this one looks like a yawner. Still, there's plenty of time for improvement.

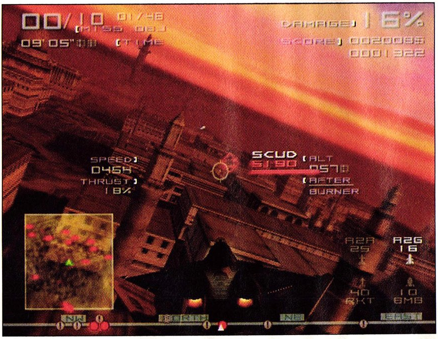
Top Gun: Combat Zones

Talk to me, Goose

"In Top Gun: Combat Zones you pilot one of eight birds of war into the real danger zone!" enthuses **Titus'** press release. "Maverick, Goose and Iceman—what more could you possibly ask for?!" Well, how about anything else related to the movie? See, the game has the *Top Gun* name, it has the character names, it has the ability to perform Maverick's famous braking maneuver from the film, and...that's it. No celebrity likeness or voices, no actual missions from the film, no parallel story—heck, the game doesn't even include Kenny Loggins' famous "Danger Zone." Weird, huh?

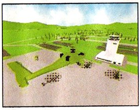
Still, Top Gun does feature eight bad-ass aircraft (from the F-14 Tomcat, to the F-4 Phantom, to the elegant Harrier) and some of the most impressively detailed landscapes we've seen. The combat zones in Southeast Asia, the Persian Gulf and the former Soviet Union are fantastically rendered, with plenty of ground structures to create an impressive sense of realism—just check out that screen of the Gulf city! The controls seem responsive and accurate, with missions having a nice level of variety. Too bad the sight distance in the game seems so limited. Perhaps that's something that can be fixed before the **October** release. We'll see.

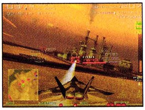




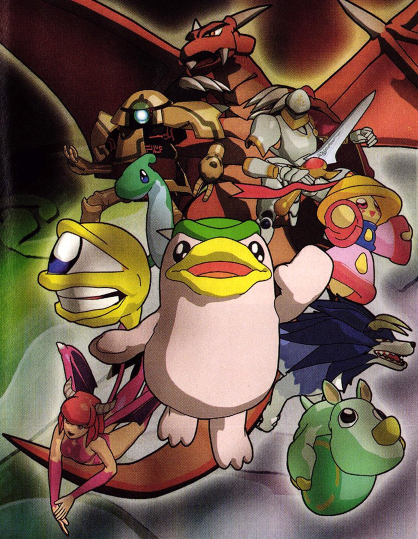
Aim High

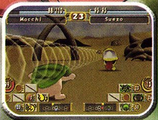
It's an undeniable fact that flight sims on the PlayStation have been all but nonexistent, most being merely stripped-down, arcade experiences. And though Top Gun is certainly a fast-action game, it does come with an impressive pedigree: Digital Integration, the game's developer, has been designing generally well-received flight sims since 1995's Apache Longbow on the PC (seen at right).





PlayStation 2

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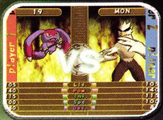
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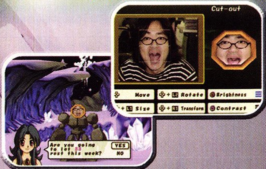
PictureParadise lets you put your digital image into the game!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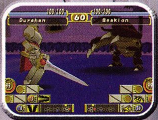
YES
NO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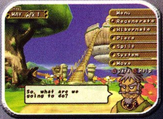
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Place
Split
System
Move

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Monster Rancher 3

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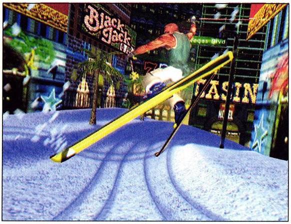
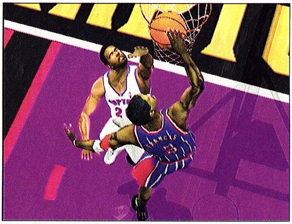
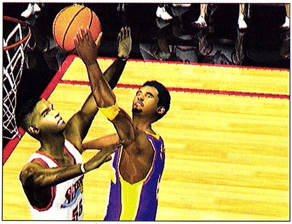


Jonny Mosely Mad Trix

Just a few moments of seeing Mad Trix in motion and it's hard to deny that it's **3DO**'s attempt to move the action of SSX from the snowboard to traditional skis. But who said there's anything wrong with that? As Olympic skier Jonny Mosely and a host of others (both real and fictional), perform some, well, mad tricks down slopes worldwide. Not just traditional ones, though. Ever wanted to ski where it doesn't snow, like Vegas or Machu Pichu? Now you can.





NBA Live 2002

Last year, NBA Live was **EA Sports'** big disappointment, especially after Madden had such a tidal-wave effect that it even reached out to non-sports gamers. While the new game boasts 50 new post-dunk animations, we're more inclined to care about the Franchise mode that allows for up to 10 seasons of being an NBA GM. Also, there are new post moves, more lay-ups and more control on the boards. This **November**, let's hope Live goes less glamour and more gameplay.

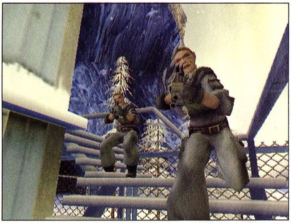
TimeSplitters 2

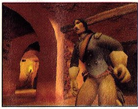
Rushed like the last one? Not this time

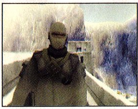
Hard to believe, but almost a year has passed now since the PS2 launched, with the original TimeSplitters proving itself one of the most solid of the titles available on day one. Because of the pressure to hit that Oct. 26 release date, however, developer **Free Radical** (known for N64's GoldenEye, as well) was never really satisfied with the final result. "TimeSplitters was done in a very short period of time," Karl Hilton, director at Free Rad, tells us. "It was always a product that wasn't finished as we would have liked it finished. It had all the things we needed, but we could have spent a lot longer on it."

In other words, the not-so-rushed TimeSplitters 2 is the developer's chance to—for lack of better phrasing—"redeem" its previous effort. And it certainly seems off to a running start, with better AI, more animations and even *more* characters than the measly 64 before (how does 90 sound?). "The AI is very much animation-driven now," continues Hilton, "so we have a whole series of very good animations based on things that we like, like diving through the air and spinning and somersaulting and stuff. And this system will choose different animations depending on what the characters are—whether they're big, heavy, slow characters or whether they're small, little fast ones—and they'll try to attack you and avoid being hit." All of this is possible thanks to a totally new engine that—get this—the developer boasts makes the game even *faster*. Is that even possible?! After all, the first ran at an infallible 60 frames per second.

If there was one knock against the original that everyone could agree with, it dealt with the story—with no cutscenes or character development, TimeSplitters pretty much didn't have one. Not so with the sequel. The extra time has allowed Free Radical to implement a deep narrative spanning the entire timestream, both for single-player and cooperative styles of play (which now allows for i.Link compatibility). Throw in the return of the fabulous level editor, and, **next spring**, **Eidos** has what could be the most anticipated first-person shooter of 2002 on its hands.







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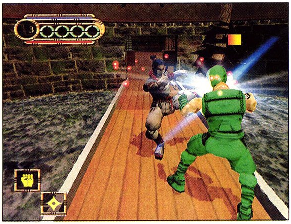
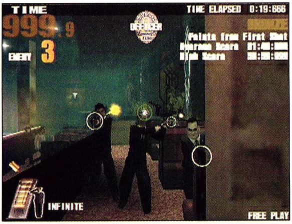
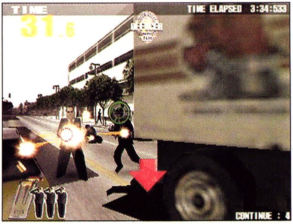


Godai: Elemental Force

If there's anything that Lunar 2 taught us, it's that with a name like Hiro, you have to be a hero. Now, with Godai, it appears that **3DO** has caught on to the idea, granting its protagonist with such a moniker. Hiro's quest is pretty run-of-the-mill: Fight through 16 ancient Japanese settings in a Fighting Force kind of way, using martial arts derived from the "Five Elements." Unfortunately, the Fifth Element is something called "Void," not Milla Jovovich. Damn.





Police 911

The recent playable sent to us of **Konami**'s **November** light-gun game showed plenty of potential. Just one problem: We didn't receive the compatible USB motion-sensor camera with it that detects whether or not you're standing directly in front of your TV (in other words, whether or not you can get shot). Just playing with the control pad is a little like watching a black-and-white film on an HDTV: You might enjoy it, but you know it has so much more to offer.

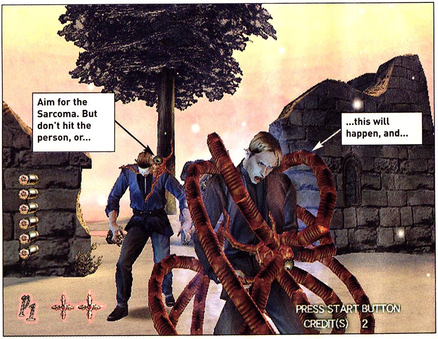
Vampire Night

Aim your Guncon2 at the undead

Namco follows up the release of the arcade hit Time Crisis II in **November** with Vampire Night, yet another arcade light-gun game giving you an excuse to use that new Guncon2. Most of the action is quite straightforward—just shoot anything that doesn't look human. It doesn't take long to realize that most of these creatures have weak spots—their heads or the explosive packs on their backs, for example—that you can exploit to quickly expose of them.

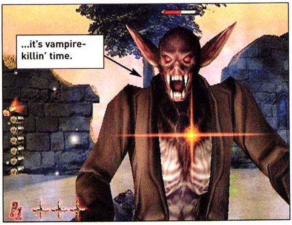
When you do run into innocent humans, you'll likely notice a sort of gelatinous glowing eye known as a Sarcoma growing on them. In actuality, this acts as a sort of vampire seed. Shoot it, and you've freed a villager from becoming a creature of the night. Miss and hit the person instead, however, and you've got a vampire headed your way.

Like any current light-gun title, frequent cutscenes heavy with dialogue (*bad* dialogue) further the pencil-thin plot. In this case, you're out to halt the evil plans of the Vampire and his four servants to turn everyone into vamps and take over the world. And yes, you read that correctly. The antagonist's name is simply "the Vampire." Fear him.



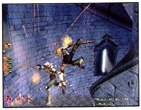
Aim for the Sarcoma. But don't hit the person, or...

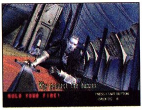
...this will happen, and...

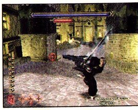


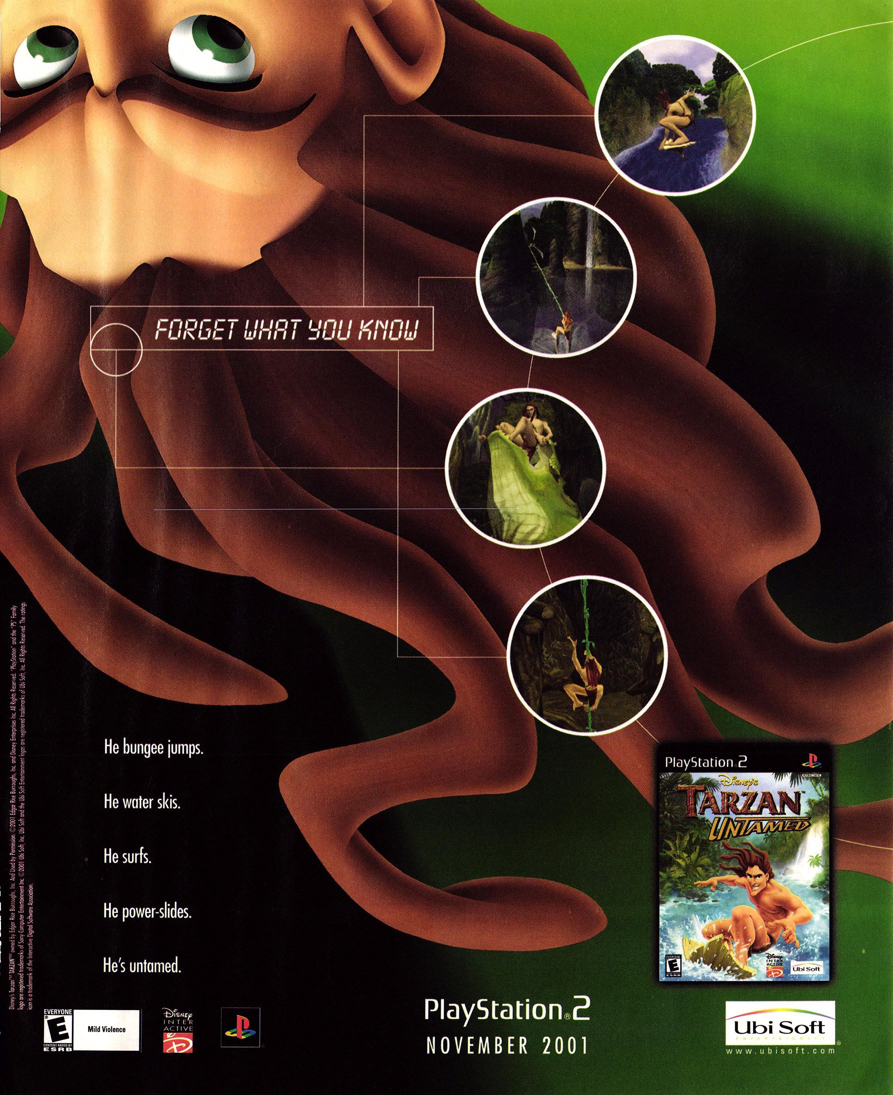
...it's vampire-killin' time.

HOLD YOUR FIRE!





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He bungee jumps.

He water skis.

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He power-slides.

He's untamed.

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB Mild Violence

Disney Interactive

PlayStation 2

NOVEMBER 2001

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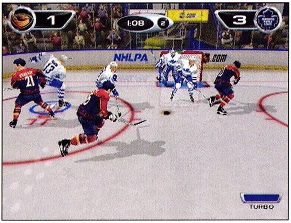
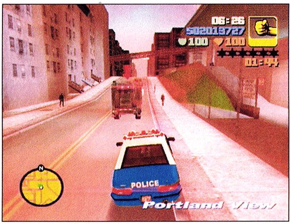
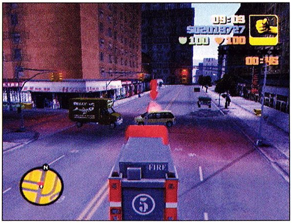


NHL Hitz 20-02

OK, so this is **Midway**'s NFL Blitz meets NHL hockey. But the coolest part of this game—besides the fact that they finally got fighting right—is the extras upon extras. The minigames, which play like the NHL Skills Competition, are good for hours of action. And winning games in the Championship Mode, grants you cash to buy old-school jerseys, new arenas and even player faces. Also, the gameplay is brilliant, smooth and ridiculously fun. Look for it **this month**.





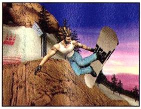
Grand Theft Auto III

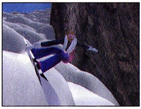
You'll be reading a lot more about **Rockstar**'s game in our cover story next month, but we wanted to take this opportunity to show off one of the cooler features of GTA3: the side missions. As you know, any vehicle in GTA3 can be hijacked. But some of those vehicles offer special functions. Hop into a police car, fire truck, taxi or ambulance, hit the R3 button, and you'll be able to chase down criminals, put out fires, pick up fares or rush victims to the hospital. Neat, huh?

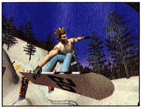
SSX Tricky

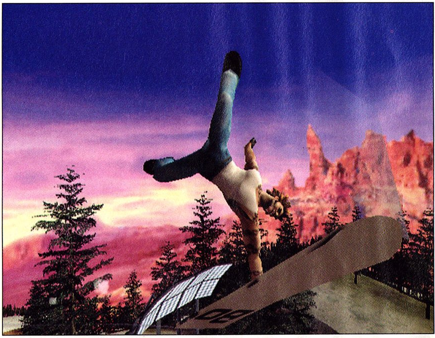
Bigger, better, faster, more!

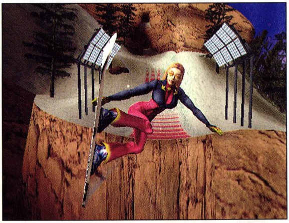
When we broke the story on the SSX follow-up back in February this year, it was a very different project. Originally conceived as an update to the first one designed to exploit some of the goodies that DVD has to offer (it was even originally set to be called SSX: DVD), the game has now blossomed into something far more spectacular. "Imagine what some of the runs would be like if they'd had millions of dollars spent on them in the real world," executive producer Steve Rechtschaffner tells us. (No, we're not sure how you pronounce his name either. We avoid saying it out loud when we ask anyone at **EA Sports Big** about him.) The courses are bigger and more elaborate, but mostly quite familiar. Tokyo Megaplex, for example, is no longer indoors. The glass walls have been knocked down, you can see the skyline, and there is now a much more intricate vertical system of things to grind along. There are new courses as well, and the game's new characters may better reflect your own personality. Joining Moby, Elise and the gang (no Jurgen or Hiro, though—they had "accidents") are a meditating "spiritual" boarder (rumored to be voiced by Billy Zane), a redneck with something that looks suspiciously like a mullet, and some very sassy-looking female characters. Watch for Tricky in **November.**

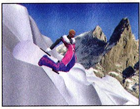












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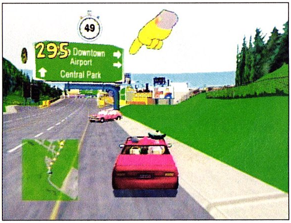
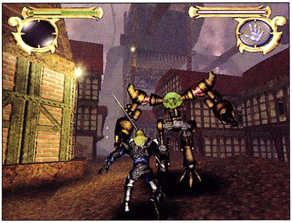


The Simpsons: Road Rage

Yep, it's exactly what it looks like. Simpsons Road Rage is basically Crazy Taxi set in Springfield. If you're unfamiliar with the arcade hit, here's the gist: Race through town, pick up fares and drop them off at their chosen destinations. Unlike real life, reckless driving is a must. **EA Games'** take on the formula features 25 Simpsons characters, five Springfield neighborhoods and more than 100 different landmarks from the series. Crash your way through Springfield this **fall**.



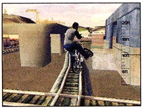
Shifters

Based on its history with series like Army Men, we're a little surprised **3DO** didn't dub this **holiday** release as "Shifters of Might and Magic." After all, the game's primary star is Alleron, that chap you remember (or, more likely, don't) from Warriors of Might and Magic earlier this year. But alas, he's only part of the story—you've got 23 other forms to shapeshift into, as well, some more ideal than others for certain situations. A branching story allows for loads of replay.

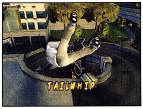
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2

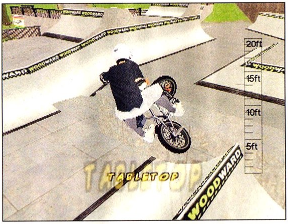
Let the PS2 BMX wars begin

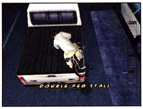
While pedaling through the Woodward Camp, an expanded version of the Dave Mirra PS one level (and we're talking *expanded*!), beware of the go-kart track off in the distance. God forbid you hop on and get knocked silly by some little kid with a steering wheel in his hands. Point is, the vastness of **Acclaim**'s Dave Mirra 2 levels is only matched by their interactivity. It makes you feel like you're part of an honest, anything-might-happen world. These environments really give the sense of independence, something necessary to make bikers feel like bikers. As for the stars of the show, five new riders join the current stable, bringing the total to 14. All bikers can achieve an infinite number of tricks because of the return of the trick/modifier button that separates Mirra (available **now**), from Activision's Mat Hoffman game. Better yet, these myriad tricks are tighter than ever courtesy of Mirra's "SIK" system (Skeletal Inverse Kinematics), which crafts animations between the motion-captured moves.

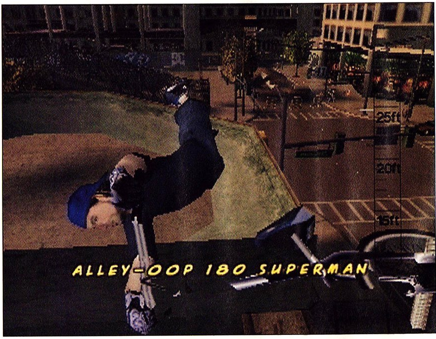


2-TRICK COMBO!
NO HANDER

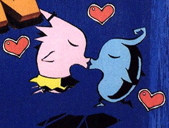






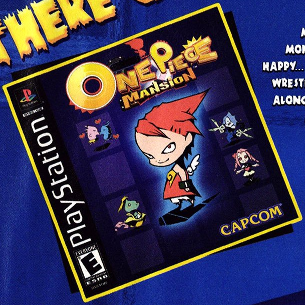


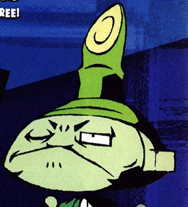
ONE PIECE MANSION™

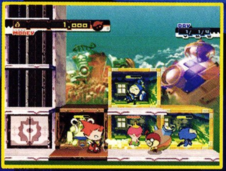


THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

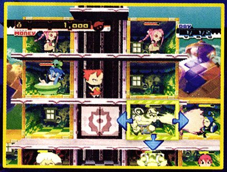
IT'S NOT EASY BEING THE LANDLORD OF THE ONE PIECE MANSION. IN THIS WACKY PUZZLE GAME IT'S YOUR JOB TO MAKE SURE LIFE RUNS SMOOTHLY. BUILD UP YOUR MANSION AS HIGH AS YOU CAN, RAISE THE RENT AND COLLECT MORE MONEY. BUT, IT'S ALSO UP TO YOU TO KEEP EVERYBODY HAPPY, HAPPY, HAPPY... OR ELSE THEY'LL MOVE AND SKIP OUT ON THEIR RENT. CAN A SUMO WRESTLER, NEWLYWED COUPLE, CAT LADY, STUDENT AND MORE REALLY GET ALONG? IT'S GOING TO TAKE SOME SERIOUS SKILL TO KEEP THE PEACE AND MAKE SURE LIFE AT THE ONE PIECE MANSION REMAINS STRESS FREE!



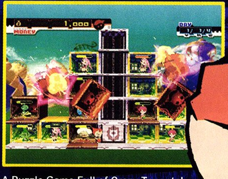




Keep the Peace Among Your Tenants in Order to Make More Money and Add to Your Mansion



Wacky Gameplay that Will Leave You Frantic!



A Puzzle Game Full of Crazy Tenants!

PlayStation

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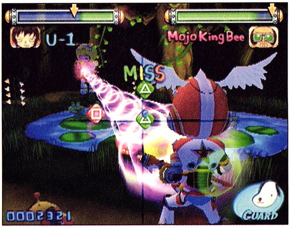
Gitaroo Man

Wail on the baddies

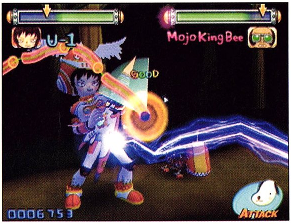
Life isn't easy for poor U-1. Not only is this snively, numerically named young boy teased mercilessly at school. Not only is he ignored by his too-cute dreamgirl Little Piko...but he also has to save the entire planet Gitaroo from the diabolical Grabaren family—which, of course, he finds out from his pet dog Puma.

That's the bizarre setup for **Koei**'s promising rhythm/action game. Talking dogs, bad names and wacky story aside, Gitaroo Man adds a few new twists to the music genre. Each level is divided into three stages. In the first part, you build up your life bar by using the left analog stick to follow a curving line while tapping and holding a button on cue. Next, in battle mode, you alternate between attacking and guarding; the action here combines the previous setup with rhythmic button tapping using the four face buttons (Triangle, Square, Circle and X). Finally, after wearing down the boss, you launch into an extended solo attack to finish him off.

The unique presentation and mechanics of Gitaroo Man make it much more than just a PaRappa wannabe. With 10 stages and a multiplayer battle mode (for up to four players), Gitaroo Man also looks like it might have something sorely missing from too many music games: longevity. Get ready to rock, Gitaroo-style, this **November**.



U-1
MojoKingBee
GREAT



NHL 2002

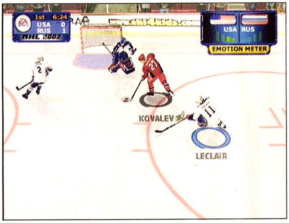
Is this the breakout season we've been waiting for?

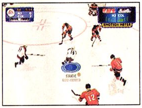
Let's not kid ourselves. **EA Sports'** NHL series has been in decline since PS one's NHL '98. Fans of the sport had hoped a shift to the PS2 would relight the dying vid-hockey flame. But those expectations were met with a fire extinguisher of disappointment last year. Instead, there was mounting frustration over the slowdown, the overdone Big Hit button and the disrupting player animations.

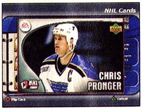
Good news is on the way! It appears that NHL 2002 will provide a huge burst of momentum for video-game hockey. Seriously. We're not promising you'll stay up all night like you did with NHL '95 on Genesis, but our fingers are crossed.

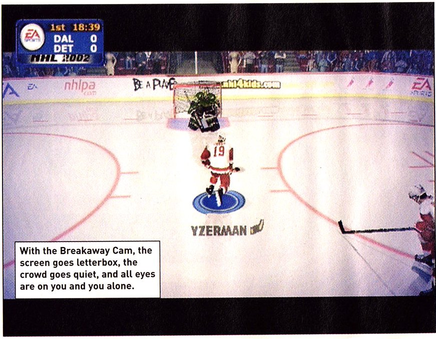
With this latest entry, the focus is definitely on gameplay enhancements, not a frivolous handful of bells and whistles. This, of course, is aided with the use of EA's established, sparkling graphics engine. But these new innovations will make any hockey gamer giggle like a school girl. The deke button, for instance, is no longer a useless contrived animation that can only fool a blind goalie. Now, for the first time, holding down the deke button means you can take control of the player's stick instead of his whole body. When you're going one-on-one with a goalie, you control everything. The new Breakaway Cam is another nice touch. When skating in all alone, the camera shifts to follow the offensive player. At first it's distracting, but after some getting used to, you'll love the way the entire game focuses on those few, brief seconds before a stellar save, a top-shelf goal or a dramatic wide shot. Another gameplay innovation that's been needed in hockey games from day one is puck possession. It's radically different than ever before. No longer is a big hit necessary to relieve you of the puck. A slight bump in the corner or trying to stickhandle through lots of traffic can leave your stick empty.

Let's all have a moment of quiet time, hoping that **this month** the hockey gods will smile down on the nimble-fingered vid-hockey fans. That once again we will have reason to half-consciously game until the sun begins to rise.



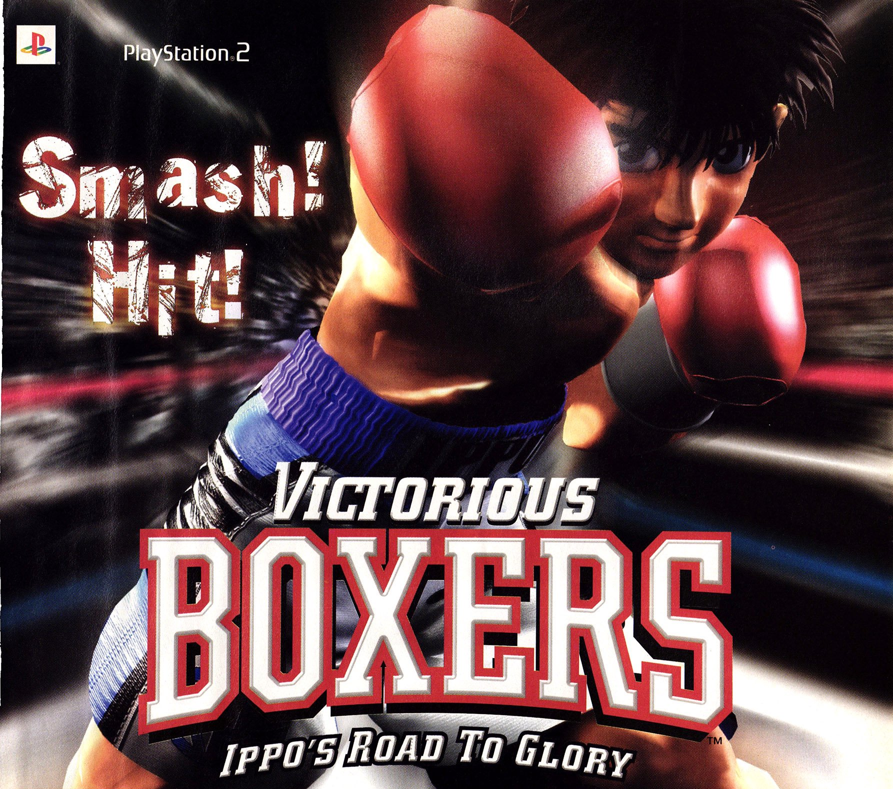




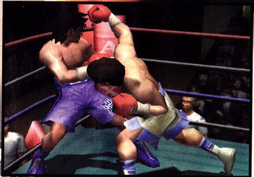


With the Breakaway Cam, the screen goes letterbox, the crowd goes quiet, and all eyes are on you and you alone.

PlayStation 2



VICTORIOUS BOXERS
IPPO'S ROAD TO GLORY™



Play as Ippo or any one of 43 other boxers. Fight your way to the top of the rankings. With 10 locations and 7 matches in 4 weight classes, you'll create your own awesome 1-2 combination.

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TEEN
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Violence
CONTENT RATED BY
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KODANSHA

Previewed Inside

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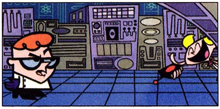
Coming Soon

September		
Barbie Explorer	Mattel	Action
Bob the Builder	THQ	Building
Dance Dance Revolution: Disney	Konami	Dancing
Hot Wheels Extreme Racing	THQ	Racing
IHRA Drag Racing	Bethesda	Racing
Looney Tunes: Sheep Raider	Infogrames	Puzzle
NASCAR Thunder 2002	EA Sports	Racing
NASCAR Racers	Infogrames	Racing
One Piece Mansion	Capcom	Puzzle
Panzer Front	Agetec	Tank Sim
Power Rangers Time Force	THQ	Action
Razor Racing	Crave	Racing
Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase	THQ	Action
Sesame Street Sports	NewKidCo	Sports
Spider-Man 2—Enter: Electro	Activision	Action
SpongeBob Squarepants	THQ	Action
Syphon Filter 3	Sony CEA	Action
Tales of Destiny II	Namco	RPG
X-Men: Mutant Academy 2	Activision	Fighting
October		
Arc the Lad Collection	Working Designs	RPG
Castlevania Chronicles	Konami	Action
Hidden & Dangerous	Take 2	Action
Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth	Atlus	Strategy
Jumpstart Kindergarten	Knowledge Adv.	Edutainment
Mary-Kate & Ashley: Crush Coarse	Acclaim	Action
The Weakest Link	Activision	Trivia
November		
Dragon Warrior VII	Enix	RPG
E.T.: Interplanetary Mission	NewKidCo	Action
FIFA 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Harry Potter & Sorcerer's Stone	EA Games	Action
Hooters Road Trip	Ubi Soft	Racing
Jesse James' 6-Shooter Showdown	Ubi Soft	Shooter
Mega Man X6	Capcom	Action
Monsters Inc.	Sony CEA	Action
NBA Live 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Activision	X-Sports
Twisted Metal: Small Brawl	Sony CEA	Action
V.I.P.	Ubi Soft	Action
December		
Dexter's Laboratory	bam!	Action
The Powerpuff Girls	bam!	Fighting
You Don't Know Jack PlayStation	Sierra	Trivia
Zoboomafoo	Encore	Edutainment
Future Releases		
Black & White	TBA	Adventure
Crossroad Crisis	Agetec/A1 Games	Puzzle
NBA ShootOut 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Snoopy's Party Adventure	Infogrames	Action
Unconfirmed Releases		
American Deer Hunter	Interplay	Sports
Backyard Soccer	Infogrames	Sports
Castrol Honda VTR	Interplay	Racing
Deep Sea Fishing	Interplay	Sports
Jeanette Lee's Virtual Pool	Interplay	Sports
M&M's	Havas	Action
Pajama Sam	Infogrames	Edutainment
Where/World/Carmen Sandiego?	The Learning Co.	Edutainment



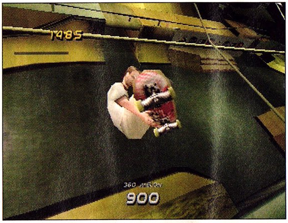
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

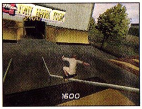
Third time's the charm

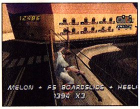
Even with the PS2 skateboarding frenzy itching to take hold, the kind-hearted souls at **Activision** are still giving PS one owners the chance to skate or die this **November**. While Neversoft won't helm this version, the very capable **Shaba** of Grind Session fame will.

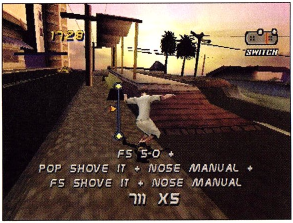
We don't like using the term "dumbed down" for THPS3 when comparing this version to the PS2 incarnation. But it's still an accurate assessment. "It feels like Tony Hawk PS2's little brother," says Activision associate producer Jeff Poffenbarger—which is just about right. After all, Shaba's dealing with some serious hardware limitations. Basically, the game looks like THPS2 with all-new, vastly decadent levels and an all-new Career Mode, with all kinds of challenging goals in place to stump the best vid-skaters in the world. However, this Career Mode doesn't mirror that of THPS2: Instead of a money-based system that translates into buying skills, tricks and boards, there's more of a return to the THPS1 ethic of simply trying to complete goals.

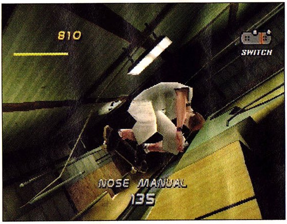
Jackass' own Bam Margera has taken Bob Burnquist's place on the skater roster, which otherwise echoes that of THPS2. And that doesn't bother hardcore THPS fans one bit, we're sure.

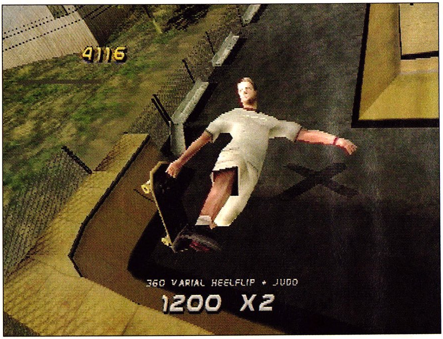












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EBgames.com	Y	$39.99	11/1/01
GameStop.com	Y	$39.99	10/30/01

all data as of 8/6/0

Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth

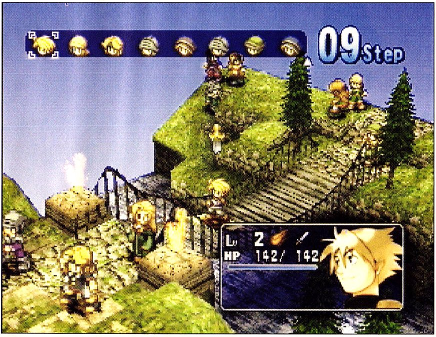
It's hip to ape Square

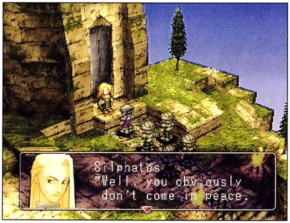
When Final Fantasy Tactics was released in 1997, it garnered critical and public acclaim...then quickly ruined the social lives of gamers worldwide. Square has yet to create a sequel, but **Atlus** has opted to release its own tactical-strategy RPG to fill the void in **late October**.

Hoshigami tells the story of a young, high-spirited mercenary named Fazz, who gets drawn into the conflict between warring kingdoms. Like Tactics, it gives players a variety of character classes to fight with in their chess-like battles, including knights, sorceresses and archers. Each character worships a particular deity, and the spells cast are either blessed or penalized according to their god's domain.

Magic includes standard elemental and summon attacks, such as fire, lightning and ice. But in the world of Hoshigami, each spell is cast from a special item called a "coinfeigm." While characters level up their abilities and understanding of their deity through battle, coinfeigms advance through the "engraving" process. A player might find his level 12 sorceress slain by a wayward arrow, but the coinfeigm can pass along to another character, thus preventing the loss of high-level spells—not to mention saving a few televisions from controllers headed their way courtesy of frustrated gamers.

In a further evolution of the genre, Atlus has developed a style of offense called the "Shoot and Attack" system, which bounces foes between party members as though they are billiard balls, suffering an attack from each. This devastating combo-style attack holds the key to victory as the game progresses. And fans of the RPG genre will doubtless appreciate the game's development, as Atlus promises close to 40 hours of story-driven gameplay (and that's not including the sidequests or hundred-level towers with a battle on each floor). And you thought you had your social life back.




Silphatos
"Well, you obviously don't come in peace.

Preorder Watch

STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
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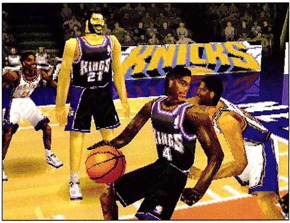
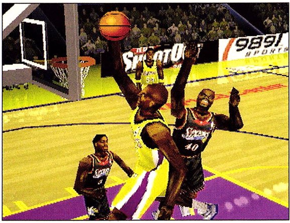
Buy.com	N	N/A	N/A
EBgames.com	Y	$44.99	10/28/01
GameStop.com	N	N/A	N/A
Microplay.com	Y	$46.66	10/1/01

all data as of 8/6/01

NBA ShootOut 2002

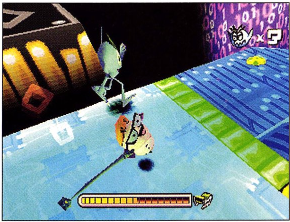
Since we know so very little about **989 Sports'** new ShootOut, we're going to recommend some basketball movies to pass the time: *Hoosiers*, *He Got Game*, *Finding Forrester*, *White Men Can't Jump* and *Teen Wolf*. Sure, the last isn't really basketball-centric, but what a laugh you'll get when Michael J. Fox turns into—get this—a wolf! As for ShootOut, we're hoping it improves on last year's average attempt. By the looks of things, it'll be out at the start of **November**.





Dexter's Laboratory

Accompanying The Powerpuff Girls to store shelves this **December**, Dexter's Laboratory brings yet another of Cartoon Network's most popular shows to your PS one, courtesy of **bam!**. Your standard Dexter versus archrival Mandark story sets the stage for what's essentially a series of 15 minigames, with names like the Cootie Run, Dee Dee's Dance Class, Dee Dee's Keyboard Tease and Dexter Dodge Ball. Your guess as to what each entails is as good as ours.



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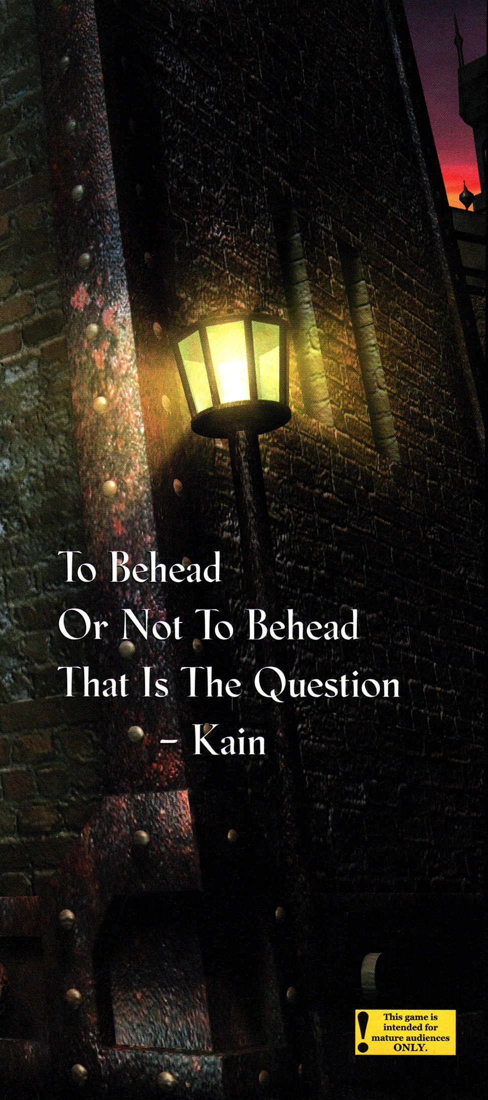
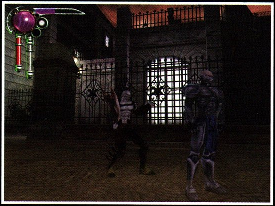


To Behead
Or Not To Behead
That Is The Question
- Kain

XBOX PlayStation 2

Kain, the most evil video game character of all time, is back to reclaim the land of Nosgoth.

Bare-clawed or with weapons, engage your enemies in close combat, then drain their corpses of blood.



Use your Dark Gifts such as possession, rupture and stealth to claim vengeance on your enemies.

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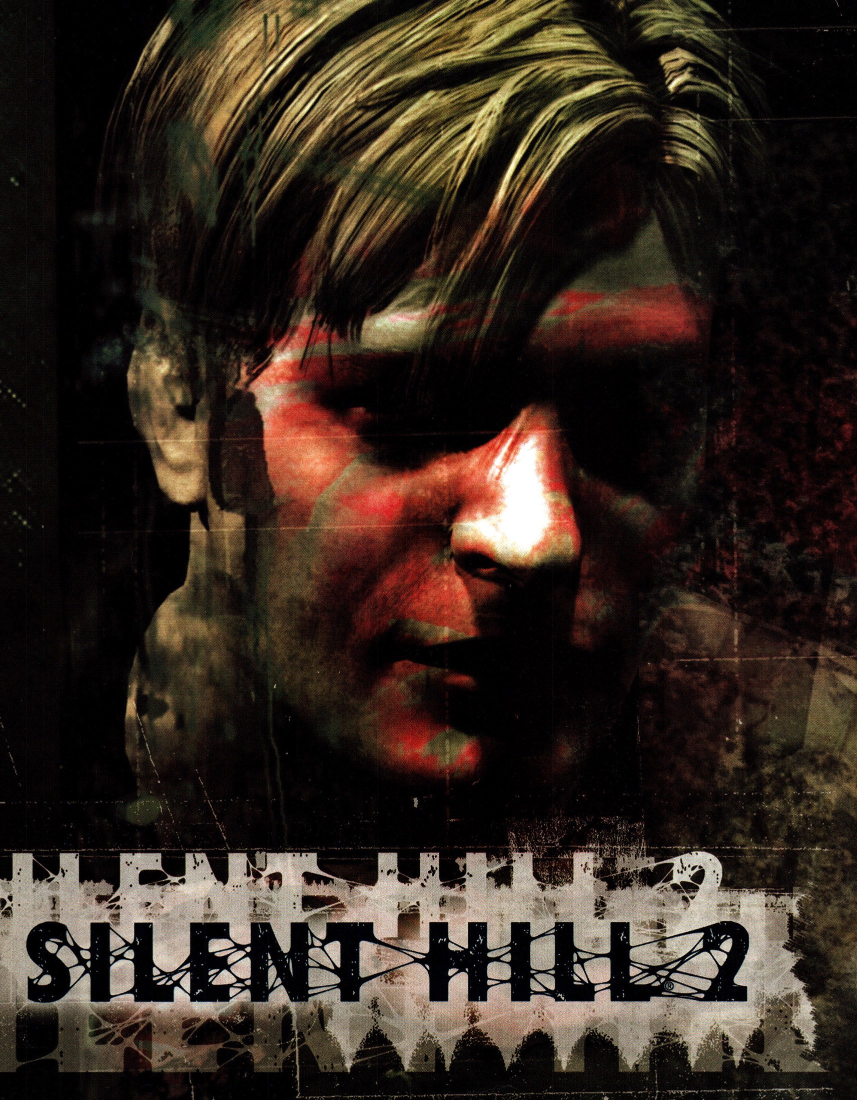

SILENT HILL 2®

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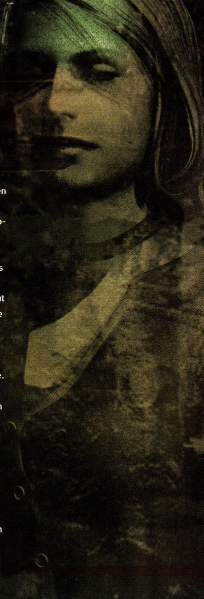
Silent Hill. A quiet little lakeside resort town. We're happy to have you! Take some time out of your busy schedules and enjoy a restful vacation here.

- Silent Hill vacation brochure, 2001



by John Davison

"In my restless dreams, I see that town, Silent Hill. You promised you'd take me there again some day. But you never did. Well, I'm alone there now...in our special place...waiting for you."

As creepy beginnings go, that has to rank highly, especially when you hear it softly and calmly spoken by a woman's voice as Silent Hill 2 leads you through its opening moments. For the first 20 seconds or so, it seems like a romantic and almost poetic note from a loved one. As its predecessor established back in 1999, though, the Silent Hill franchise cranks the creepy dial up to 11 almost as soon as the experience begins when you learn that this is a letter from lead character James' wife. Scratch that—dead wife. A wife who died three years ago leaving the hero alone, desolate and, frankly, somewhat freaked out now that she's taken to writing love letters from idyllic lakeside resort towns.

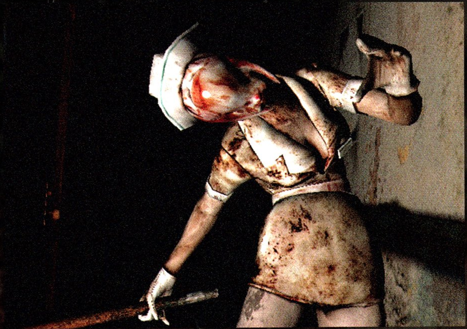
As the first scene unfolds James has arrived on the edge of Silent Hill. He's stopped at a fairly typical-looking public men's room, presumably not to admire the muck streaks daubed across the walls and puddles of indeterminate origin, but to freshen up. The urinals are dirty and damaged, grime encrusts the wash basins, and from the wall hangs a mirror, smeared and damaged. As he peers at himself, he's clearly questioning the sanity of the quest he is about to embark upon. Is his wife really waiting for him by the lake in Silent Hill? Or is someone just yanking his crank?

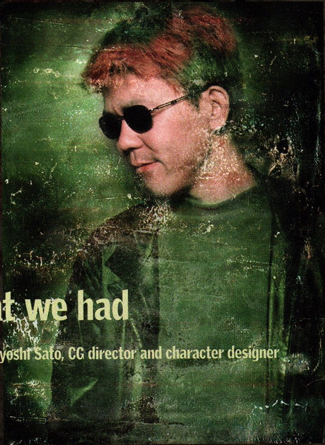
THE SCARIEST GAME EVER?

The half million or so of you familiar with the original Silent Hill have no doubt been looking forward to this for some time now. Previewed way back when the PS2 was first announced, the prospect of technology "catching up" with the concepts of the original game is genuinely thrilling. While the franchise hasn't yet garnered the cachet of Konami's "other" big game, Silent Hill 2 is certainly looking to be one of those all-important "event games" of the fall.

With Resident Evil–Code: Veronica X already out, the "survival-horror" genre is certainly heating up. But is Silent Hill 2 even the same kind of game? In some ways yes, although it's far less violent, relying more on spooks and psychological terror than ridiculous-looking tentacle monsters. Is it the scariest game ever made? Well, unless there's something out there that we haven't seen yet, we have to say "yes."

It's not that it necessarily makes you jump with fright, although it does from time to time. It's not that there are really any particularly revolting monsters; in fact, the majority of them look faintly ridiculous if you manage to get up close. What's unique about Silent Hill 2 is that it just makes you feel uncomfortable. Like a really good horror movie, it manages to evoke a paranoia that "something bad is going to happen any second now" for its entire length. Remember how the first time you saw *The Exorcist* you felt





so tense that you ached by the end of the movie? This game manages to produce the same kind of response, and somehow the emotional release of the action is never quite enough to make that tension completely go away.

"Rather than just making people scared, I would like to offer a world which you cannot experience in normal daily life," producer Akihira Imamura explains. "If you actually become scared, I would be very much pleased as a creator."

Come late September, he should be glowing with the pleasure of a job well done. Late-night play sessions with an almost-finished version have prompted quite disparate reactions from the *OPM* staff. While some feel that the whole imagery is simply too much and really not the kind of thing they'd like to indulge in, others have been drawn in simply to watch the story unfold. What everyone has in common, though, is that after extensive exposure, it gets under your skin in a big way. Normally stable folks become nervous walking across an empty parking lot in the dark. The slightest sound in the otherwise idyllic silence after a late-night gaming session becomes reason to exhibit signs of nervousness. This is not the kind of thing a game is normally able to induce. You may think that we're just being over-sensitive, or being drawn into the hype of what is, after all, the game we've bet our cover on this month. But Silent Hill 2 really is that scary.

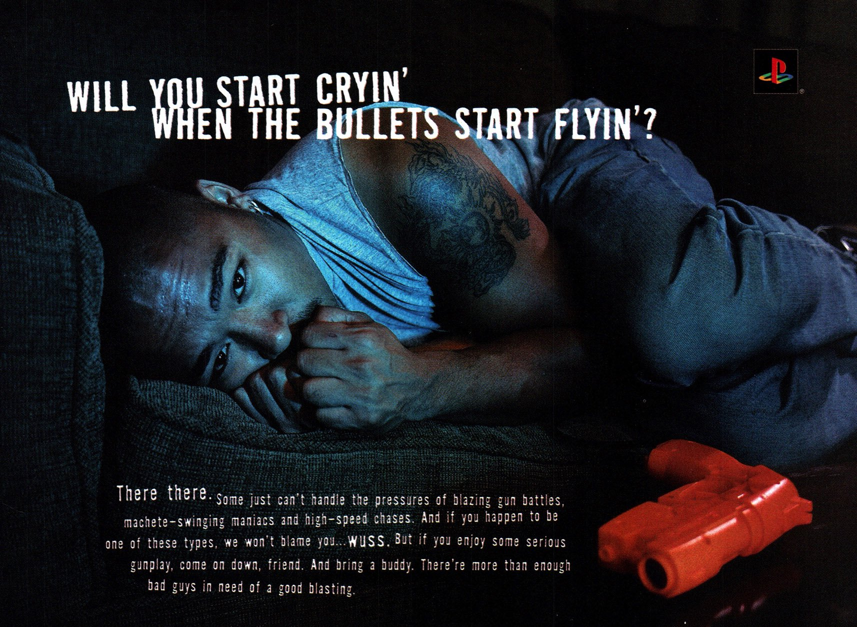
> "There are things that we had to tone down." Takayoshi Sato, CG director and character designer

APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

Despite the early press on the game, and the impressions posted online by enthusiastic fans of early trailers and videos, Silent Hill 2 is far from the orgy of

THE ULTIMATE MOVIE NIGHT: SILENT HILL STYLE

If watching the Silent Hill 2 piece on our demo disc and reading this feature gets you in the mood for scaring the bejesus out of yourself, why not prepare yourself with some movies of the same ilk? Grab that rental card and gather together a Silent Hill-style movie night. First up, pop *Jacob's Ladder* in and let it mess with your head. Try not to get too squeamish during the hospital scenes and stick with it, even though it gets a bit weird. Next, go for an older classic: *The Exorcist*. Try to get your hands on the new special edition if you can...and if you get hungry, don't eat any pea soup. You'll know why if you watch the flick. Next, you'll need to experience David Lynch's seriously disturbing *Eraserhead* (for the sound effects if nothing else), and then, for "light relief," finish up with Romero's *Dawn of the Dead*. Enjoy.



WILL YOU START CRYIN' WHEN THE BULLETS START FLYIN'?

There there. Some just can't handle the pressures of blazing gun battles, machete-swinging maniacs and high-speed chases. And if you happen to be one of these types, we won't blame you... WUSS. But if you enjoy some serious gunplay, come on down, friend. And bring a buddy. There're more than enough bad guys in need of a good blasting.

Play additional mini-games: Quick&Crash, Shoot Away 2 & Agent Trainer.

Incredible two-gun, one-player mode: You've got two hands, use them both at once. Oh yeah!

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Violence

TIME CRISIS II®

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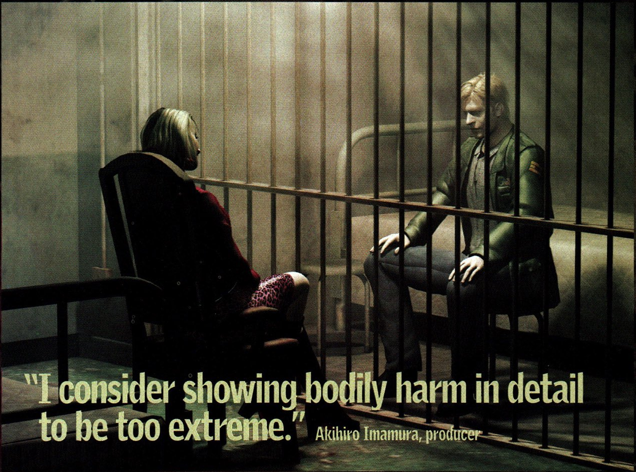
Despite all of the press about the nasty cutscenes with the writhing creatures and general gooey, slimy nastiness, the really creepy moments in Silent Hill 2 come elsewhere. Often it's the interaction with the other characters that proves to be most disturbing.



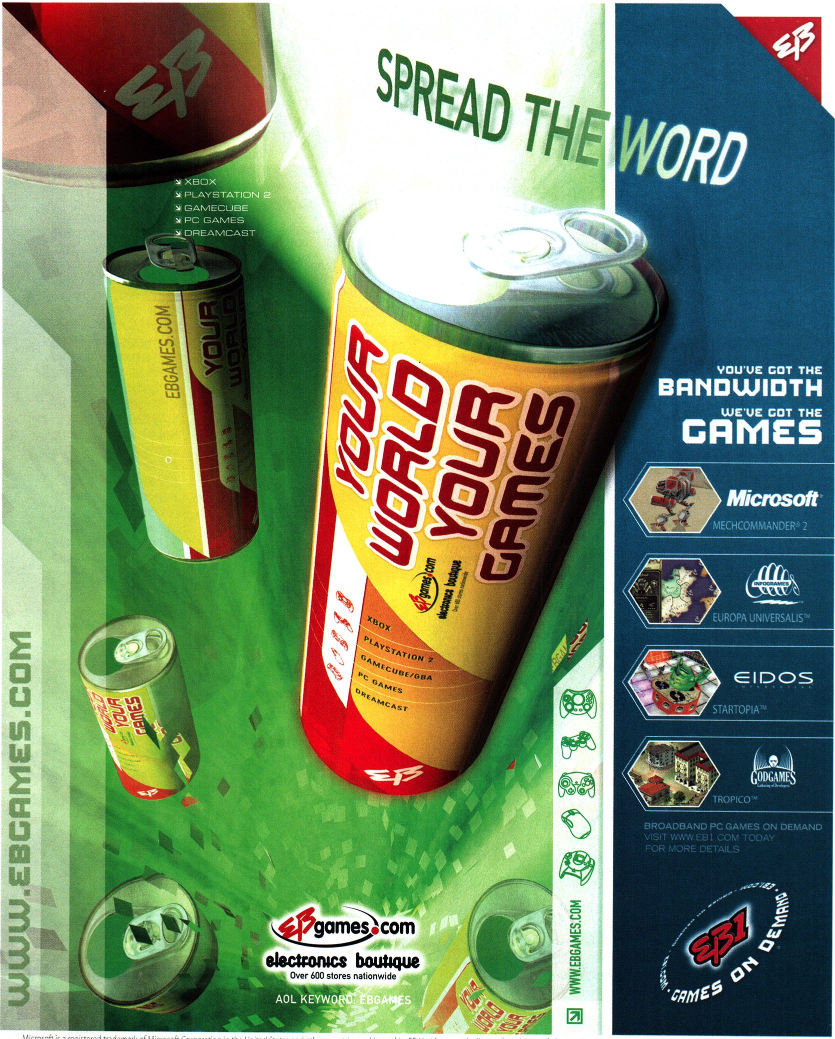
"I consider showing bodily harm in detail to be too extreme." Akihiro Imamura, producer

carnage, depravity and violence that you might expect. Sure, it's disturbing as hell and has some nasty imagery depicting the aftermath of untold violence, but it's rare that you ever really see anything actually violent and akin to "slasher-flick" content. Telling anyone who has already been exposed to the prerelease hype this and it usually provokes the same response: "Yeah...well what about..." followed by a brief description of something implied by the already released footage.

Like any truly great psychological thriller, though, the majority of the horror occurs when your imagination "fills in the blanks" between scenes. "I suppose it is a technique of not telling everything," Imamura explains. "By leaving some parts mysterious and leaving it up to your imagination, you can boost the fear and anxiety much more."

Consider, for example, that in *Psycho*, you never actually see the knife making contact in the famous shower scene. You know it's happened, but you don't need to see it to comprehend the horror. "There are things that we had to tone down," CG director and character designer Takayoshi Sato confesses. "We try not to make any expressions that may cause a moral problem," adds Imamura. "I consider showing bodily harm in detail to be too extreme."

In fact, the majority of any particularly nasty violence in the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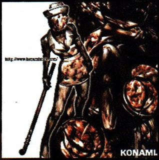

Already courting controversy in its home turf, the original print campaign for Silent Hill 2 in Japan was recently banned. We have to admit, it is pretty gross.

first few hours is almost entirely perpetrated by the player. If you choose to wale on anything creepy that happens to cross your path, you have the option to do so. But as with Metal Gear Solid, if you choose to simply avoid the bad guys, you seem to be able to get by without any bloodshed.

When pushed on his inspiration for provoking a response from players, Imamura explains that the thing he believes scares people the most is "to lose something." The game provides you with a story of loss, and then continues to relieve you of things as it progresses. First, it's your sense of direction because of the fog that enshrouds the town. Then it's your vision in the darkness of the buildings that you explore. And finally, it's the sense of reality as the game world slowly devolves into something that defies normal logic. "The fear of not being able to see what's ahead or around you is something that really disturbs human beings," Imamura ponders, as he tries to sum up the very core of the games' psychology.

PRESENTATION IS EVERYTHING

If you've already checked out all of the screenshots throughout these eight pages, you'll no doubt agree that Silent Hill 2 is a strikingly good-looking game, both in the way that the visuals look and the camera angles used to convey the action. "I watch quite a lot of horror movies," Imamura explains (like we couldn't guess). "They are great references for tricks, production, camera angles and picture representation."

In fact, production values in every aspect of the presentation are truly superb. Take, for example, the gritty look of all the environments. Whereas so many games have a shiny, sharp and pointy-edged look to them, this is a far more organic-looking game. This is due to a number of factors. First, the claustrophobia of the architecture and the way that it's lit means that an awful lot of detail can be packed into the limited field of view. The building interiors are lit by flashlight at best, so every scratch, every flake of old paint and every dubious-looking stain appears as realistic as you could want. Second, all of the graphics have been treated with a grainy filter effect to give a film-like appearance. Check the screenshots again and you'll notice that everything looks a bit grimy—that's intentional. "We're really proud of the analog film kind of style," Imamura enthuses. "We wanted to create a non-polygonal-looking image, and that's why the game has the noisy look."

While the graphics are the most obvious point of interest, once you spend some time play-

DO YOU LIVE IN SILENT HILL?

"The town of Silent Hill has a mysterious force," Imamura tells us. "It exerts its influence on people, and the town shows a world which you cannot distinguish from nightmare or reality. Why does the town exert such force? No one has yet discovered the cause."

Do you know the cause, though? Do you live somewhere called Silent Hill? Is it always creepy, enshrouded in mist, and populated by lolloping monstrosities that spit venom and writhe around in a state of perpetual agony? If you do, we want to know about it. Send us photos, descriptions and accounts of anything creepy you've encountered to:

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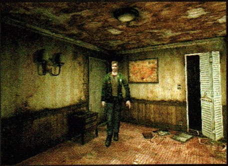
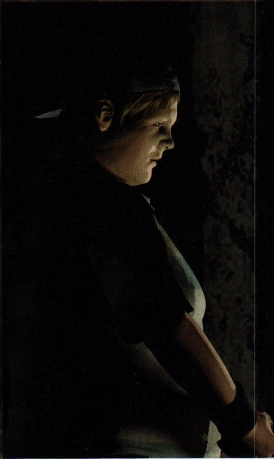
Oak Brook, IL
60522-3338
or e-mail us at opm@ziffdavis.com

In the meantime, we unleashed our crack team of investigative reporters (oh, OK, we admit it, we did a search for Silent Hill on AskJeeves, Google, About and Yahoo!) to track down locations in the U.S.

What did we find? Well, according to the Geographic Names Information System (fancy, huh?) there's a Silent Hill Cemetery in Orangeville, Ill. In Sikeston North, Mo., there's a Silent Hill Church. And there are two more cemeteries in North Dakota, in Aneta and Finley. If you live in these places, or any that we might have missed, be sure to write and let us know.

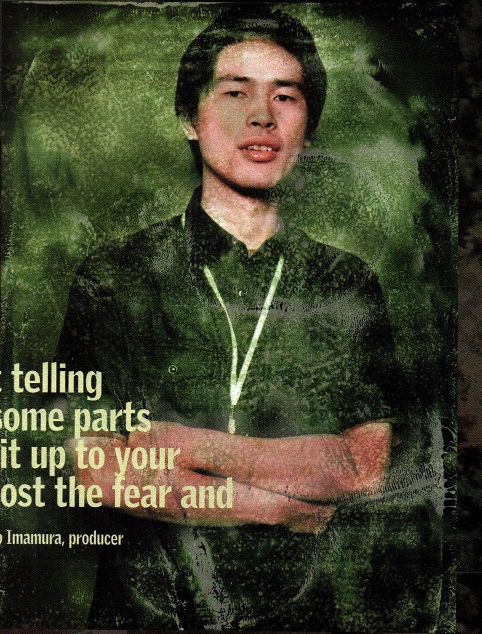




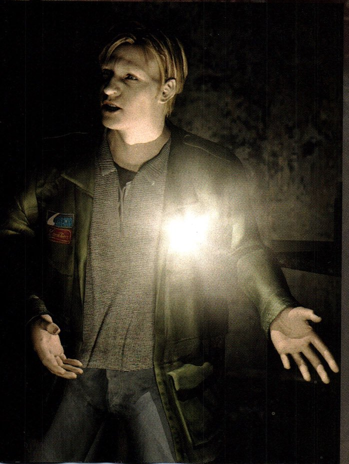
ing it becomes clear the sound actually contributes to the majority of the "scariness."

As with the original game, the haunting guitar-rock accompanying the more dramatic moments certainly has a certain spooky quality, but few instances exist where anything melodic is really heard. As you can see, the town is almost entirely deserted, and consequently entirely silent. You hear the steady trudge of your feet as you walk, but aside from that the sonic "baseline" there's little else. As the tension builds, layers of white noise and rhythmic clunks, screeches and groans are added to the soundscape, as nasty things are about to happen.

The original game made use of a pocket radio to help you detect when a bad guy neared you, its presence causing interference and a familiar crackle of sound. Silent Hill 2 uses this sonic device also, but there are subtleties to the cacophony that not only help build the tension,



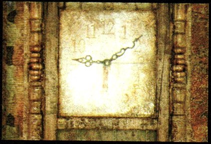
"It is a technique of not telling everything. By leaving some parts mysterious and leaving it up to your imagination, you can boost the fear and anxiety much more." Akihiro Imamura, producer



PUZZLING

Although a lot of the gameplay structure is similar to other "survival horror" games, the puzzles which make up a great deal of Silent Hill 2's content are quite different. Whereas other games opt for a "find the object and put it in the right place" approach, this game (like its predecessor) opts for a more cerebral approach.

The first major puzzle comes quite early on. After the game has taken you by the hand and provided you with the tools you need to succeed (a weapon, the radio for detecting bad guys and the flashlight), it then throws a series of riddles at you. Although hardly the most complex riddles you're ever likely to come across (one involves a clock, but we won't spoil it for you), they offer more of an "old school" challenge than we've grown accustomed to. Solve the riddles, piece together what needs to be done, follow through to the logical conclusion, and sit back as new story elements open up.



Henry
Mildred
Scott

One of the most significant parts of the Silent Hill 2 experience involves the sound. The white noises, creaks, growls and groans were all pieced together by sound director Akira Yamaoka

HAUNTED TOWNS

Our research into towns in the U.S. called Silent Hill was considerably less productive than we'd hoped. Still driven to find evidence of a "real-world" example of a town like that in the game, we broadened our vision and tried to track down some haunted locations. Not haunted houses—they're a dime a dozen. What we wanted to find was an entire town that will give you the heebie-jeebies. According to the following Web sites there appears to be no end of weirdness out there, including some bizarre areas near our offices in the Chicagoland area.

www.ghosthunter.org
www.ghostresearch.org
www.prairieghosts.com
www.parascope.com

Obviously, we were too busy (read: scared) to actually check them out.

> **"Not being able to see what's ahead or around you is something that really disturbs human beings."** Akihiro Imamura, producer

but also attunes you to the slightest changes in sound, both in the game and in the real world. Some of the scariest moments occur when you walk into a room and a burst of white noise explodes through your speakers, evolving into an industrial rhythm. Often this is a precursor to something terrible happening, but often it simply draws your attention to the environment. Play the game for any length of time and the sounds simply induce paranoia.

"You will notice instantly if you play without the sound," Imamura tells us. "Although I leave all of the music and effects to the sound director, he always creates sound which is beyond my imagination."

NIGHTMARE CREATURES

Despite the claustrophobia, the darkness, the fog, the horrific sounds and disturbing stories, a game like this needs some character to help drive the story along. While James is a nice enough chap, it's his interaction with the other characters that really helps drive the story. Only a few humans really make contact with you, but each adds a different dimension to the experience.

In some ways, it's seeing how these characters react to Silent Hill itself that drives the creep factor upward. Take, for

No one
Can stop
Mr. Domino

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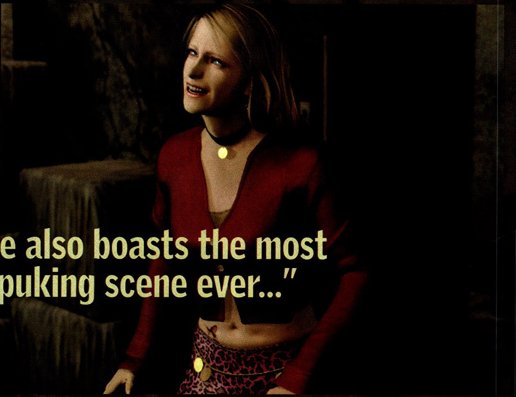
example, the woman you meet in the graveyard on your way into the town. At first she seems level-headed and pleasant. But the second time you cross paths with her—once she's given up on her own personal quest—it's clear that she's nuttier than a fruitcake. If you don't like those freaky moments in horror movies where clearly disturbed people describe events with a surreal sense of detachment, then you will find some of these scenes unpleasant.

Speaking of unpleasant, Silent Hill 2 also boasts the most grotesque puking scene ever witnessed in a video game. As with everything else, you never actually witness the technicolor yawn itself, but the chap praying to the porcelain god as you watch over him makes some of the most convincing noises we've heard since, well, the last time any of us threw up. All the embarrassing little noises that no one ever talks about can be heard, including the nasty little puke-burps. "The scene originally had a lot more vomiting in it," Sato confesses. "For some reason, during our editing, the computer we were using crashed and we lost it. I figured it was a message from God telling me that we went too far."

The monsters, on the other hand, are the types that work best when you just catch a glimpse of them, just like those in the majority of horror flicks. "It is as if we give an idea of fear a shape," Imamura enthuses. If you analyze the weird "two pairs of legs joined at the hips" monsters too much, they really are a bit silly. But when you catch a glimpse of them scuttling away down a corridor, barely lit by the glow of your flashlight, they take on a far more terrorizing persona. So do the seriously creepy creatures that look like they're wearing a skin-straightjacket. It's hard to describe quite what they look like, but the first time one drops to the floor and scuttles away like a giant insect (complete with horrible clicky sound effect), you'll feel a prickle on the back of your neck. Wait until they start jumping out of places at you too...then you'll really freak out.

But ultimately, that's all part of the fun.

Silent Hill 2 is due in stores on Sept. 25.



"...the game also boasts the most grotesque puking scene ever..."

The Silent Hill 2 creative team (from left to right). CG director and character designer Takayoshi Sato, producer Akihiro Imamura and sound director Akira Yamaoka.

THE FIRST SILENT HILL

The original Silent Hill shocked everyone in any number of ways. Not only was the notion of a survival-horror game from Konami something of a surprise for many, but the fact that it was so advanced technologically immediately prompted waves of adoration. "More than just a Resident Evil clone," we stated on our March 1999 cover, before going on to give the game a respectable score of four out of five. "Where one might compare Resident Evil with movies like *Night of the Living Dead*," said Joe Rybicki in his review, "I would compare Silent Hill with more genuinely disturbing films like *The Exorcist*."

The creepiness came from the very nature of the story. Whereas the sequel has you searching for your wife—who, as far as you're concerned, died three years ago — the original had you looking for your lost child. Memorable neck-tingling moments tended to involve some creepy use of voice acting, most notably the unplugged phone ringing in the derelict school and your daughter simply squealing, "Daddy? Daddy?" on the other end before hanging up. See, even talking about it is creepy. Look for the game if you can find it. It's a classic.

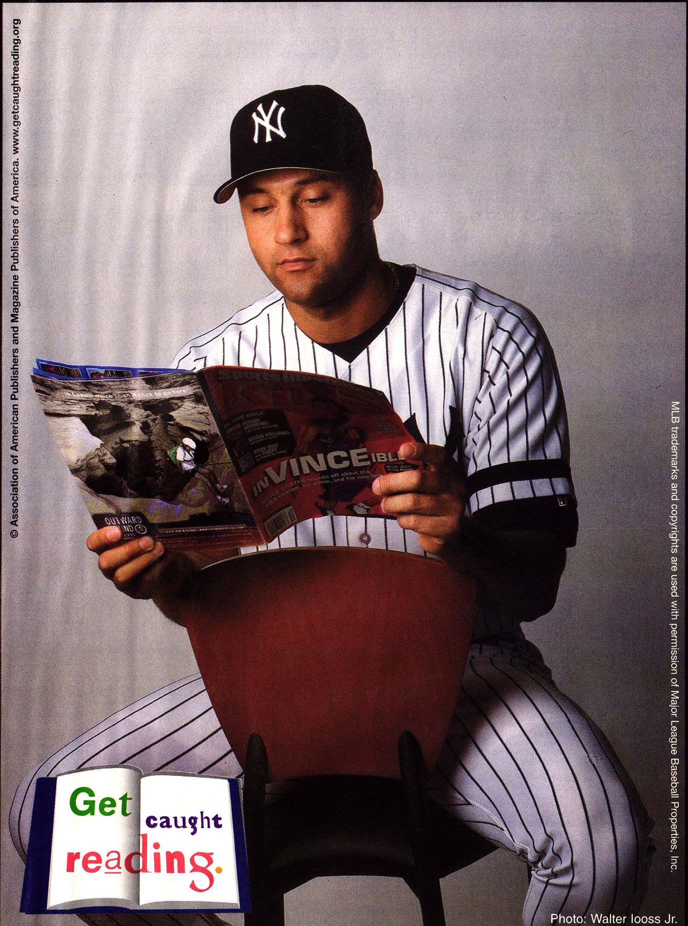

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Photo: Walter Iooss Jr.

Derek Jeter caught reading.

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Demo Disc playables: MediEvil, WarGames Defcon 1, Dragon Seeds, G-Darius, Future Cop L.A.P.D., Colony Wars Vengeance
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Demo Disc playables: R4: Ridge Racer Type 4, WCW/nWo Thunder, Rollcage, Warzone 2100, Rugrats: Search for Reptar

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Demo Disc playables: Um Jammer Lammy, Sled Storm, Chocobo Racing, Pong, Monaco Grand Prix Racing

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Demo Disc playables: Metal Gear Solid, WipeOut 3, Omega Boost, NFL Xtreme 2, Jet Moto 3, Toy Story 2, Pac-Man World

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Demo Disc playables: GT 2, Madden NFL 2000, NFL GameDay 2000, NCAA Game Breaker 2000, Cool Boarders 4

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Demo Disc playables: Star Wars Episode 1: Jedi Power Battles, Tenchu 2, WDW: Magical Racing Tour, Destruction Derby Raw, Play with the Teletubbies

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Soul Reaver 2

Demo Disc playables: Grind Session, Rayman 2: The Great Escape, Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX, Tyco R/C Racing

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Star Wars

Demo Disc playables: Bust-A-Groove 2, RC Revenge, Team Buddies, Sydney 2000, Muppet Monster Adventure, Sno-Cross Championship Racing

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PS2 Revealed

Demo Disc playables: Crash Bash, Incredible Crisis, Jarrett & LaBonte Stock Car Racing, Spyro: Year of the Dragon, UFC, *plus* Metal Gear Solid 2 video!

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Crash Bash

Demo Disc playables: Madden NFL 2001, Star Wars Demolition, MTV Sports Pure Ride, Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX, Disney's The Emperor's New Groove

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Gran Turismo 3

Demo Disc playables: Driver 2, Spider-Man, The Grinch, 102 Dalmations, Army Men Air Attack 2

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Z.O.E.

Demo Disc playables: Spyro: Year of the Dragon, Star Wars Demolition, Crash Bash, Cool Boarders 2001, You Don't Know Jack, Mort the Chicken

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EA Sports Big

Demo Disc playables: CTR: Crash Team Racing, Hot Shots Golf 2, Grind Session, Disney's Tarzan
Video previews: Soul Reaver 2, ATV Offroad Fury, Fear Effect 2

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Twisted Metal: Black

Demo Disc playables: Championship Surfer, Power Spike Volleyball, Tigger's Honey Hunt
Video previews: Twisted Metal: Black, Shadow of Destiny

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MoH: Frontline

Demo Disc playables: Cool Boarders 2001, MediEvil 2, The Legend of Dragoon, The Emperor's New Groove, Metal Gear Solid, Legacy of Kain, Ape Escape, Tekken 3, Syphon Filter 2, *plus* The Bouncer, Red Faction videos!

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Dark Cloud

Demo Disc playables: Grind Session, Hot Shots Golf, Dino Crisis, Klonoa
Video previews: Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge, Dark Cloud

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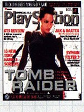
Tomb Raider

Demo Disc playables: Tomb Raider II, III & Last Revelation, Alone in the Dark, Gran Turismo 2, Dave Mirra: Maximum Remix, Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge
Video previews: Winback, Gauntlet: Dark Legacy

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Final Fantasy

Demo Disc playables: Final Fantasy VIII
Video previews: Final Fantasy VII, FFIX, FF Tactics, Klonoa 2, Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing and the *Final Fantasy* movie trailer

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ICO

Demo Disc playables: Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
Video previews: Disney's Atlantis: The Lost Empire, Okage: Shadow King, Escape from Monkey Island, Drakan II, Legion: The Legend of Excalibur

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THE FINAL SCORE

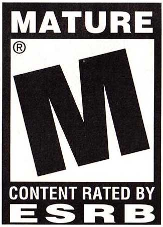
●●●●●

We rate games on a five-point scale. So, .5 is terrible, 2.5 is mediocre and 5 is superb. Get it?

Play The Game That's Right For You

It looks like folks are starting to pay attention to ratings at last

Have you seen the award-winning ESRB (Entertainment Software Rating Board, www.esrb.org) public-service announcements? Tiger Woods, showing an uncharacteristic sense of humor as he parodies his own Nike commercial, bouncing a tennis ball before whacking it from the court onto a golf course, scoring a hole in one? Or how about Derek Jeter standing in a batting cage having every kind of ball known to man thrown at him before one finally breaks the camera lens? So far they've aired on three national networks, and 45 local outlets. This March, the campaign won "Best National Public Affairs Campaign" for its "Check the Rating" ads from the American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC). The AAPC also awarded the Tiger Woods spot a first-place award for best National Public Affairs Television Ad.



That's pretty good progress for a sector of the entertainment industry that was being used as a political whipping boy less than a year ago. How much of this is due to political interference? How much is directly attributable to the actions of folks like Joe Lieberman or David Grossman, beloved to game fans everywhere? Very little. Yet again the games industry is leading the way in voluntary ratings. "The ESRB is an independent, non-profit organization that has developed a comprehensive rating system for computer and video games to help you decide which games are right for your home. ESRB also provides services for rating Web sites and online games, for ensuring online privacy protection, and for reviewing advertising created by the interactive entertainment industry." That's the tagline for the ratings board, and it has been the same way for a lot longer than people have tried to blame light-gun games for people being very good at shooting stuff with real guns.

"We want to make sure that parents and consumers have the tools they need to monitor which computer and video games their children play," says Dr. Arthur Pober, president of the ESRB. "When parents check the rating, the control is in their hands—right where it should be." At last, sanity reigns. People will still, no doubt, try to point fingers when it suits them politically, but at least there's now some momentum when it comes to people actually paying attention to the damn things. Thank God for Tiger Woods, eh?

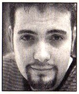
This month in reviews we have a wide spread of games wearing ratings throughout the spectrum. As usual, though, the number of M-rated games is minimal, with only Silent Scope 2 warranting the need for you to be "mature."

The next few months are going to be different, though, especially for the PS2. What games are you looking forward to most? Metal Gear Solid 2? Silent Hill 2? Devil May Cry? Soul Reaver 2? Grand Theft Auto 3? All are M-rated, and will be backed by huge marketing campaigns. When you walk into a games store during the holidays this season, these will be the games that you're being bombarded with information about. Thankfully though, given the aforementioned awards, we'll hopefully see a lot less press about how despicable the whole games industry is for trying to "corrupt the nation's youth."

If you're not a fan of M-rated games, or are a reader under the age of 17, don't worry. You aren't being left behind by developers: As always, the majority of titles in development are still intended for you. Come November you can sink your teeth into Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, SSX Tricky, Hot Shots Golf 3, Herdy Gerdy, any number of sports titles, and quite literally hundreds of others. Doesn't it feel good to have Derek Jeter on your side?

John Davison
Editor In Chief

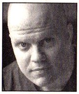
MEET THE CRITICS



JOHN DAVISON

The incessant and ultimately fruitless tweaking of a puny Miata in GT3 has been a constant distraction for JD this month. That and being scared senseless by Silent Hill 2.

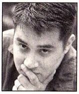
FAVORITE GENRES: Racing, Action, Adventure
CURRENT FAVORITES: GT3, Ico, GT3, GT3, GT3 and, um, GT3
CAN'T WAIT FOR: GTA3. Devil May Cry, Silent Hill 2, MGS2



JOE RYBICKI

When he at last earned the Suzuki Escudo and the F090/s in GT3 this month, Joe was left pondering an ageless question: When you've got the best, what else is there?

FAVORITE GENRES: Adventure, Puzzle, RPG
CURRENT FAVORITES: GT3, Dark Cloud, Burning Airlines and Aina
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Baldur's Gate, GTA3, the Tenacious D album



GARY STEINMAN

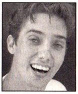
Sure, Gary *claims* he's not hardcore. But his idiot savant-like ability to cobble together a coherent sentence with the words Okage, Hoshigami, Mocchi, Rikku, Piposaru and Ka and tells a different story.

FAVORITE GENRES: RPG, Adventure, Action
CURRENT FAVORITES: Ka
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Okage, FFX, Ico, Hoshigami, Monster Rancher 3

CHRIS BAKER

C-Bake's been kind of cynical lately. Why? Maybe 'cause he hits the quarter-century mark this month. Or maybe it's because his only review game was Dark Angel. Sheesh.

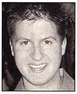
FAVORITE GENRES: Action, RPG, Adventure, Sports
CURRENT FAVORITES: NCAA Football 2002, Time Crisis II
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Castlevania, Maximo, Batman, Baldur's Gate



TODD ZUNIGA

It's official. Todd will be leaving *OPM* to move to Liberty City. Slowly and carefully, he will work his way through the mob. Wish him luck. He's never stolen a car before.

FAVORITE GENRES: Sports, Extreme Sports, Literary Humor
CURRENT FAVORITES: GTA3, Ico, Madden, OpiumMagazine.com
CAN'T WAIT FOR: THPS3, NFL 2K2, a new Tobias Wolff book



SAM KENNEDY

Coming back from his trip to Europe, Sam found copies of Maximo, Baldur's Gate and GTA3 waiting on his desk—but couldn't play them! Gary made him finish his work on this issue first. That meanie!

FAVORITE GENRES: Action, RPG
CURRENT FAVORITES: Ka, Time Crisis II, Maximo, Baldur's Gate
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Capcom vs. SNK 2, Twisted Metal Online

Dark Angel

Dark Angel

Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse

Publisher Metro3D
Developer Metro3D
Web Site www.metro3d.com

Know what? In a roundabout sort of way, the sword-wielding, megathin brunette on the cover of Dark Angel kind of resembles Jessica Alba—but that's the *only* thing this game shares with the Fox series you might immediately associate it with. Rather, Metro3D's heroine, Anna, lives in the 1600s, taking on mutants, ghouls and other monsters (not too many *vampires*, though) in a hack-n'-slash Diablo wannabe—**easily the worst modern game of its genre**.

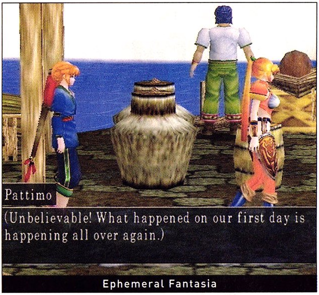
You know something's missing right away when hitting Start immediately throws you into a battle—no story to set up this action/RPG. I wasn't even sure who was friend and who was foe in this initial skirmish, as I often aimed attacks toward my AI-powered allies. You spend most of the time alone, though, braving three multileveled dungeons and three other single-leveled areas. **The tedium sets in quickly** when hack-n'-slash gameplay lacks the diversity of a Gauntlet or the strategy of a Dynasty Warriors 2, leaving only six plain, similar levels for an adventure that feasibly lasts 100 hours.

I do have to admit that the premise of building up Anna and the three towns (each with a whopping population of five) to prepare for the coming of the Shadow Lord at year's end bears great potential. The poor execution just ruins the experience.

Final Score ●◖

Chris Baker

Players: 1
Memory Card: 284 KB



Pattimo
(Unbelievable! What happened on our first day is happening all over again.)

Ephemeral Fantasia

Ephemeral Fantasia

Publisher Konami
Developer Konami
Web Site www.konami.com

As a game that was originally planned for the Dreamcast console and then released early in the PS2's life cycle in Japan, Ephemeral Fantasia looks rather poor next to most of the PS2 games of today. Filled with lots of jagged edges and rather simplistic textures, Ephemeral is a good example of first-generation PS2 graphics. And while I don't necessarily need an RPG with Final Fantasy-quality graphics to keep me interested, Ephemeral also disappoints in almost every other department, making it **one RPG I'd highly recommend skipping**.

A good example of why I don't like this game is its characters. You play the role of a scam artist named Mouse, who for the most part comes off as an annoying twit. His partner, a talking guitar by the name of Pattimo, is supposed to provide comic relief, but presents nothing but insipid dialogue. And other characters who you meet along your quest just don't seem to make much sense either.

Ephemeral also suffers from a rather immature storyline. There are no surprise plot twists, no mysteries to unravel—**nothing to keep you hooked at all**.

But what really ruins the game for me is its reliance on time. Seemingly really cool on the surface (the main protagonist Xelpherpolis has the world caught in a time loop that repeats itself each week, causing you to replay scenes over and over), the time aspect isn't executed well at all. You're required to obtain items or meet characters at specific times or else you have to wait until a following day or week until you can do so again. But often you aren't given enough time to reach destinations, or more often than not, the game will simply warp you to areas to meet appointments if you fail to meet them yourself. It just gets really, really confusing.

And with lots of running around areas filled with **boring random battles**, Ephemeral Fantasia just continues to bring on the suck.

Since the PS2 can play PS one RPGs, I'd highly recommend lots of those over this game any day.

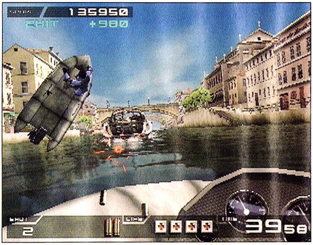
Final Score ●◖

Sam Kennedy

Players: 1
Memory Card: 259 KB

Ephemeral Fantasia

Ephemeral Fantasia



Time Crisis II

The classic gun shooter comes home

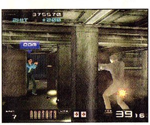
Publisher Namco
Developer Namco
Web Site www.namco.com

All right! I've been dying to get some good gun-shooting action on the PS2! Namco has wisely remade its 1998 arcade classic and now **it simply looks and works great on the PS2**.

For those of you who've never seen the original, it's typical arcade gun-shooter goodness. The game dishes out lots of fast-paced action and requires you to stay on your toes by dodging enemy fire with its duck/reload button (found on the bottom of the new GunCon 2).

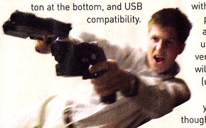
What I really love about Time Crisis II is its **great level design**—the speedboat chase or the train car-shootout areas especially. This game has so many areas that not only look cool, but are really inventive for the gun-shooter genre. Also, there are lots of spots that allow you to destroy elements in the background, causing giant explosions or shattering glass all over the place, which just adds to the fun factor.

And one of the best parts of the home version is that it rewards you for playing it more and more by offering more credits and giving you



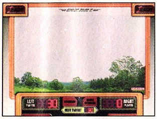
HIGH-TECH WEAPONRY

Packed in with every copy of Time Crisis II (as well as Namco's other upcoming shooter, Vampire Night) is the new iteration of the GunCon, simply referred to as the GunCon 2. New additions to this version include a D-pad on the back, a reload button at the bottom, and USB compatibility.



The gun itself, while a bit lighter than the older model, actually feels a lot better in your hands, and the addition of the reload button at the bottom really adds to the fun of using this gun. The only real drawback to the GunCon 2 is that you can't play with S-Video unless you pick up a special attachment. Also, unfortunately, the U.S. version of the peripheral will be bright orange (unlike the cool Japanese versions you see here). Overall, though, Namco's done a stellar job with the new gun.

Final Score ●●●●



access to new secrets as you go along. Leave it to Namco to do something like this—most gun shooters don't give you anything.

Another aspect that adds to the game's longevity is the inclusion of some mini-games that look like they came from the Point Blank series. They may be simple, but they're plenty of fun to toy around with in your spare time.

But as with the arcade version, Time Crisis II's best aspect on the PS2 is its two-player mode (it's so much better to play with a real second player as your partner instead of the CPU buffoon you normally are stuck with). It's great with the split-screen windows, but even better if you are able to use two PS2s and hook up via the i.Link connection.

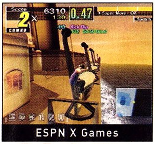
There really aren't any drawbacks to Time Crisis II on the PS2 other than the fact that **as a home game it's rather short**. But it really matters little, as this is the type of game you'll play over, and over, and over anyway. I suppose the only things I really wish this game had are more interactive backgrounds and more weapons to pick up, but those have already been addressed with Namco's latest arcade shooter Crisis Zone. So now all we need is for Namco to port that one to PS2. But until then, pick this game up and have a blast!

Final Score ●●●●

Sam Kennedy

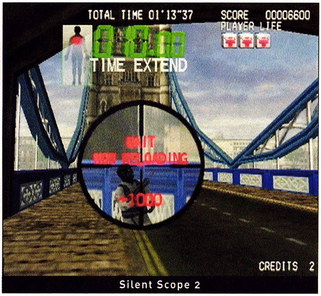
TEEN T

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 72 KB



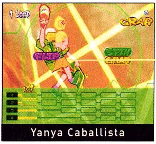
ESPN X Games

ESPN X Games



Silent Scope 2

Yanya Caballista



Yanya Caballista

ESPN X Games Skateboarding

Publisher Konami
Developer Konami OSA, Ltd.
Web Site www.konami.com

I'm an absolute sucker for skateboarding games. Since Neversoft and Tony Hawk teamed up and started spreading the skating love, I've been riding that bandwagon silly. And with the ol' THPS bias in tow, I figured I'd shrug off ESPN's skateboarding game as another never-will-be. But that's not the case. Instead, I'm playing it nonstop trying to master every facet of the game.

Keep in mind that not many moons ago, Grind Session hit the PS one, preceding Tony Hawk 2, and my skate maw was filled with GS's capable medicine. I now come to a similar crossroads. ESPN's Skateboarding game is better than THPS2 (for PS one) because of its graphical sharpness and newness, but **I know it won't be able to compete once THPS3 drops in on mankind**.

Regardless of THPS3's merits, though, ESPN has assembled a deep, fun game. You can compete in the X Games vert and park competition or you can put a hurt on the Arcade mode (ESPN's career mode) which features San Fran, L.A. and my personal favorite: the inside of a museum (all have secret areas). It features eight skaters including X Games medalist Bob Burnquist, who jumped ship from THPS2, and Colin McKay.

As for the game's look, **the graphics are sharply drawn** and there are plenty of effects like T-shirts blowing in the wind and people scurrying away from you, telling you to go skate somewhere else.

But a few negatives exist. There is distracting slowdown on different levels and, **at times, the control is a little shoddy**. When you're trying to make a tight turn, you can get bounced away from your intended target. Maybe that's more realistic, but save the simulation aspects for landing physics and grinding. To combat the turning, though, you do have full reign over how your board reacts by building it yourself.

Also, I'd really like for my skater to take off after a crash, but if I hold down the X button to crouch, ready-ing for an ollie, he'll stay still. Realistic, but dumb.

Even with my THPS3 bias, I'm fond of ESPN's effort. Once you master the controls, you'll love it.

Final Score ●●●●

Todd Zuniga

E

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 40 KB

Silent Scope 2

Publisher Konami
Developer KCET
Web Site www.konami.com

If there was anything wrong with the original Silent Scope it was that it was a bit too simple. Sure it managed to bring the arcade experience home, but, let's face it, you don't pay $49.99 for something you can blast through in the arcades for a few dollars if you're pretty good at it.

The sequel takes a very similar route to its gun-toting rival over at Namco in that **it develops the plot considerably and throws in a pair of characters** ('cause, like, it's Silent Scope "2", yeah?) who tackle the missions in the story mode together. Unlike the buddy love in Time Crisis 2, the two heroes in Silent Scope 2 have a serious problem with each other, and the tension between them would have been an interesting dynamic if the plot, script, acting and execution of this particular aspect wasn't **so completely clichéd and cheesy**.

The gameplay is just as good as last time, though, and beefs up the action considerably by offering more "mobile" levels (including trendy terrorists shooting at you from snowboards), some much more imaginative bosses and some groovy gadgets for your gun. The x-ray mode is a particular fave of mine, and I wish that its inclusion weren't so scripted as I could happily crack away at wonderfully rendered skeletons all day.

It's not the deepest game ever made, but **it is one of those things that you can use to get a quick fix of gaming**. Some of my complaints about the original haven't been fixed, though—most significantly the fact that once you croak you have to go all the way back to the beginning. There don't appear to be any save points, and it really forces you to "earn" those extra lives in order to continue. Sure, this encourages you to be a kick-ass marksman, but I really don't want to play through the whole thing when I make a dumb mistake right near the end.

If you don't have the original, and are intrigued, I'd definitely encourage you to check this out. It's probably not necessary to own both, though, unless you're a bit of a loon about the series.

Final Score ●●●◖

John Davison

MATURE M

Players: 1
Memory Card: 75 KB

Yanya Caballista: City Skater

Publisher Koei
Developer Koei
Web Site www.koeigames.com

Ignore the title. It's apparently an underhanded attempt by Koei to sabotage their own game. A really fun game. Save for the waste of letters that make up the title.

Moving on, know that **this is not the next coming of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater with cel-shading!** Not hardly. It's a cartoony skateboarding game in which the plot matches that of a Jackie Chan flick: Ghostly aliens (known as Gawoo) have overrun the city. The only people who can turn things around are the Caballista, which is the idiot term for skateboarder. You'll unlock some wild characters along the way, all chock-full of personality, and you'll save urban America from complete ruin.

Sanitizing the city is done with a fingerboard that attaches to the analog sticks of your Dual Shock. Problematic? Not as much as you might think. I was ticked at first, but after going through the training session (which promises to be "fun") I fancied myself a heck of a Caballista. Or Yanya. Whichever.

A limited trick set takes away from the power of the game, but the graphics are brilliant. There are lots of unlockables throughout and plenty of minigame challenges to keep the game fresh.

Like the title, Yanya isn't for everyone. But I give it a thumbs up.

Final Score ●●●◖

Todd Zuniga

EVERYONE E

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 466 KB

DDR: Disney Mix

DDR: Disney Mix

Dance Dance Revolution Disney Mix

Publisher Konami
Developer Konami/Disney Int.
Web Site www.konami.com

When I reviewed the first U.S.-released DDR in issue 48, I warned players that they'd have to check their machismo at the door—it's impossible to play DDR without looking like a spasmodic geek.

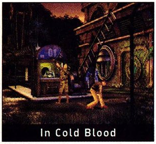
That being the case, I don't even know what to say about Disney DDR, except this: If you want to enjoy the game, you're going to have to come to terms with the fact that, yes, you do actually sort of like "It's a Small World" and "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious." In other words, **if you're not at least to some degree a Disney fan, you're going to want to look elsewhere**. Luckily, the songs aren't all Disney fare—there are a few classics in there (like Chubby Checkers' "Let's Twist Again") and a few songs from previous Japan-only DDR editions.

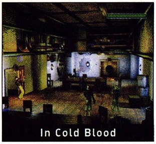
Other highlights: The Diet mode from the last DDR is incorporated into the main game, presenting you with a summary of calories burned after each track. Also included is a "Dance Magic" competition in which you can "attack" computer or human opponents—mess with their timing, render their step indicators invisible, etc. **None of these things are enough to make the game extraordinarily superior to its predecessor**, but it's certainly every bit as good.

Final Score ●●●●

Joe Rybicki

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block


In Cold Blood


In Cold Blood

In Cold Blood

Publisher Dreamcatcher
Developer Revolution
Web Site dreamcatchergames.com

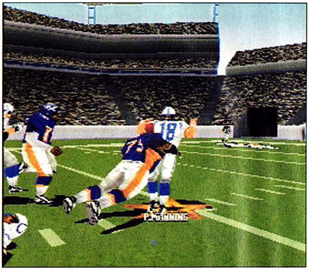
While In Cold Blood exhibits some problematic qualities within seconds of loading it up, the underlying story should be applauded for its originality. Dealing with the memories of a captured agent describing his missions to an enemy during a particularly nasty interrogation, it's a big game (on two discs) that theoretically offers a much lengthier experience than its contemporaries, though I seriously doubt the "60 hours" claim on the back of the box. In terms of how this translates into gameplay; it's **an interesting hybrid of Metal Gear Solid, Fear Effect and Resident Evil**, which captures the essence of each without ever achieving the greatness of any.

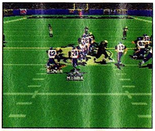
First, the load-times are dreadful and seriously affect the pace. Second, there's some weird-ass logic: Walk into a room, an enemy opens fire and *then* asks "Hey, what's wrong with you?" Um, hello? According to the box this is "advanced AI." **Seems like psycho, loony AI to me**. Most importantly though, the control system can be cumbersome and confusing. Often you'll blunder your way into the path of enemy fire because the orientation of the screen changes between scenes. Coupled with the choppy animation, this means you get stuck in an evil screen-loading loop until you die. What fun.

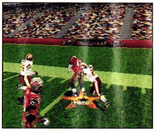
Final Score ●●

John Davison

Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block







Madden NFL 2002

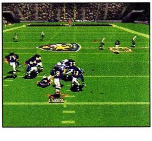
A perfect gift for the sports gamer you love

Publisher EA Sports
Developer EA Sports
Web Site www.easports.com

The PlayStation 2 may be backward compatible, but more and more, I'm finding I'm not. After reviewing the hugely improved and excitingly fun PS2 version of Madden, I had to settle in with its ugly PS one stepchild.

I've long fancied myself a sports gamer who could look beyond graphics to feast on the meat of its game engine. In fact, last year I argued that Madden's PS one version should be the *OPM* Sports Game of the Year instead of the PS2 version. I was outvoted, and scratched my head. Now, with hindsight on my side, I know I was stupidly barking up the wrong graphical tree.

But for those who don't have deep enough pockets for a PS2, make no mistake about this version of Madden. It's **still the best football game of the 32-bit generation**. This year the wizards at EA Sports have added in plenty of goodies including the Sega Genesis version of Madden '93 and a new Create-A-Team Mode that allows for you to construct a team from scratch starting with the expansion draft. The Franchise Mode continues to be bewitchingly deep and the game is still fun.



But what I've noticed while backtracking onto the PS one is that **the lack of solid graphics means the game makers are free to make mistakes that we're only figuring out now *are* mistakes**. For instance, the diving and the jukes are beyond the bore of realism. Each dive is a helmet-thrust starting at someone's shoulder blades. In the NFL, if this same dive was directed at a quarterback, there'd be a fat yellow flag following the play. Also, the juke will allow a ball-carrier to slide about two yards (six feet!) in the process. That's the kind of move that could make *anyone* miss.

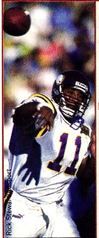
Madden continues to rule the PS one, but I hope that this is its swan song. I want to remember it as one of my favorite games from way-back-when, instead of finding nit-picky mistakes that make me like it less.

Final Score ●●●●◖

Todd Zuniga

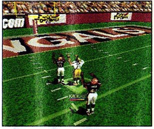
Players: 1-8
Memory Card: 8 blocks

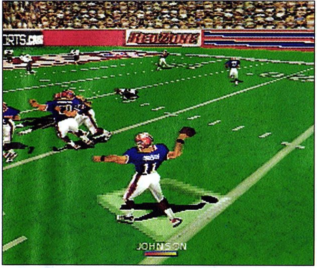
Madden NFL 2002

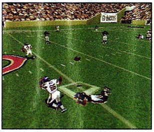

Rick Stewart/Allsport

The Vikes' soul may be Randy Moss, but now their heart is Daunte Culpepper.

Player Models	Smaller and more attractive than GameDay. Nicely shaped.
Depth	The Create-a-Team and the inclusion of the Houston Texans set this one apart.
Defending a Pass	Still missing some frames of animation. There's no hand "batting" the ball away.
Stupid Feature	The Mulligan or do-over makes a mockery of the game. What can I say? I'm a purist.
Special Moves	On "O" the juke goes too far. On "D" the dive is unrealistic. But both are a blast.
Extras	The Create-a-Team and Madden '93 add fun and nostalgia. Plus Madden Cards.
Overall	If you have a PS one, there's no doubt that this is the football game to own.







NFL GameDay 2002

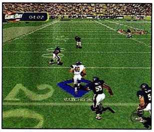
A perfect gift for the sports gamer you hate

Publisher Sony CEA
Developer 989 Sports
Web Site www.scea.com

Have you ever had that out-of-control feeling? The kind of falling-down-a-flight-of-stairs in-your-sleep type of moment? No? Well you haven't played the latest GameDay, now have you? **I've had more control when driving a car without a steering wheel** (not to be done outside of suburban driveways). But maybe I'm being harsh. After all, how important is controlling the happenings on the field of a sports game anyway?

Control aside, I must ask when this is all going to stop. Is this GameDay 2002 I'm playing? Or '99? Or '01? It all just seems to be the same messy jumble of polygons every year. And none of it is noteworthy.

The gameplay, besides the lack of control, remains a mystery to me. Any fun that might come from GameDay's run game is lost after just one running attempt. **There's no real touch or feel.** You just glide along until you get hammered. Oh, the fun! And the routes that receivers run are less static than last year, but there's still not enough differentiation in the playbook. What happened between last year and this one? Where's the attention to detail that allows Madden to run roughshod over GameDay every single year? Give me something to go on 989, not just something to go off on.



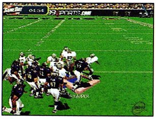
I beg you to rent this game first and try to complete some passes. First you're sure to notice the lack of rhyme, and soon after, the lack of reason. When it comes to lacking, this game has it all.

My advice: Find your worst enemy and buy him or her a copy of this year's GameDay. It's the last great sports torture on PS one. Or so I hope.

Final Score ●●

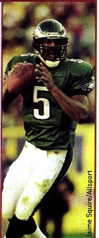
Todd Zuniga

Players: 1-8
Memory Card: 5 blocks



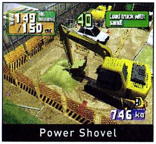
NFL GameDay 2002

The player models are chunky. Maybe they could use some tender-loving care.	Player Models
We're graced with a Season Mode, but where's the Franchise?	Depth
Defending passes is a crapshoot. It's the game's ugliest facet.	Defending a Pass
Who are the dorks who play GM Mode? I mean, seriously. Get this out of here.	Stupid Feature
Special moves? Ha. You can do a jerky spin, a jerky stiff-arm, or just fall down.	Special Moves
If you press Start, there's a menu that will let you quit. That's all the extras I need.	Extras
Another helicopter pass from 989. Hopefully they were busy working on PS2.	Overall

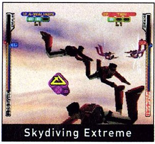


Jaime Squire/Allsport

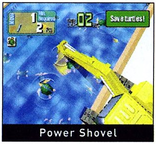
Donovan McNabb *was* the Eagles offense last year. And he'll do it again.



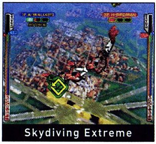
Power Shovel



Skydiving Extreme



Power Shovel



Skydiving Extreme

Power Shovel

Publisher Acclaim
Developer Taito
Web Site www.acclaim.com

Back in college, when I had a part-time job delivering fried chicken by bicycle through the mean streets of Manhattan, my pappy used to comfort me with that old cliché: "Beats digging ditches." Well, thanks to Power Shovel I can triumphantly tell my poppa that he couldn't have been more wrong. Back then, I never would have thought that menial tasks like loading dirt into the back of a truck could be so much fun. But now I know better.

Power Shovel, a port of Taito's Japanese arcade title, isn't just a construction simulator, though. The game also **includes a bunch of nutty minigames**, like using your heavy machinery to relocate turtles (yes, *turtles*) from one swimming pool to another, or dipping your massive bucket into voluminous vats of curry and then pouring it onto gigantic plates of rice. I kid you not.

While the controls are awkward at first (Taito had to map a rather complex set of moves onto the Dual Shock), **once you get the hang of it, the game is quite addictive.** I spent hours trying to pass all the license tests and had a grand time noodling around with all the minigames. There's even a decent level editor.

If this were a $10 title, it'd be a no-brainer. At $20, though, Power Shovel may not be worth it for all gamers. It's more of a novelty item, but in the best sense of the term.

Final Score ●●●

Gary Steinman

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

Skydiving Extreme

Publisher Natsume
Developer Banpresto
Web Site www.natsume.com

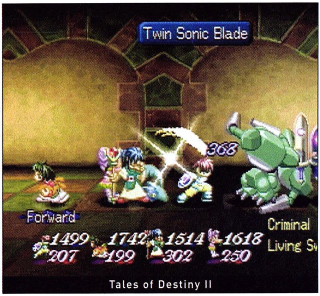
It must have sounded like a good idea at the time. I mean, think about it: skydiving! Thrills! Chills! Wind! Turn it into a game and it's pure gold, baby! Right? Er, no.

See, the problem is, there's absolutely no way to effectively communicate the feeling of actually falling through thousands of feet of air—not on the PS one, anyway. But you'd think in spite of that fact that the designers would make some effort to allow players to directly control their characters, right? You'd think that...but in this case, you'd be wrong. Instead, Skydiving Extreme is **basically Bust A Groove in the air, minus the rhythm.** That is to say, your job is to hit the appropriate button combinations in the appropriate sequence and then to sit back and watch your little troop pull off some improbable midair maneuver. The point is to do enough tricks that you stay in the air longer than your opponent; whoever reaches the ground first loses. It's awfully simple, but without the addictive quality many simple games have. Instead, **it just feels tedious, and the choppy, gritty graphics make it a pain just to look at.** Seems to me you could get much the same effect if you threw an electronic game of Simon out of an airplane...except that might actually be fun.

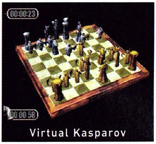
Final Score ●◖

Joe Rybicki

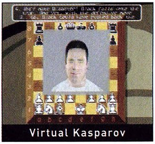
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block



Tales of Destiny II



Virtual Kasparov



Virtual Kasparov

Tales of Destiny II

Publisher Namco
Developer Namco
Web Site www.namco.com

With its innovative battle system, sumptuous 2D graphics and lengthy quest, Tales of Destiny II has all the makings of a superior RPG. But thanks (or should that be "no thanks"?) to a throwaway story populated by one-dimensional characters, Tales II falls short of its promise, delivering **a solid but uninspired game that never really grabbed me**.

And that, my friends, is a major problem in an RPG. If you want me to spend countless hours buried in endless dungeons and wading through waves of random battles, then you'd better give me a good reason to commit to the game. As is, I always had that nagging feeling that if I put Tales II aside for just a day or two, I'd never get around to picking it up again—not because it's bad, but because I just didn't care all that much.

The good news, though, is that **the story picks up after about a dozen hours**. Better yet, right around that time, the battle system gets a lot more manageable. Early on, battles are fraught with an out-of-control helplessness, as you take charge of only one of your four-member party and set strategies for the other three. Similar to a stripped-down fighting game, you start off with a small range of basic attacks, along with a handful of special moves. Meanwhile, your three allies punch, kick and cast spells willy-nilly, in what often degenerates into a chaotic mess.

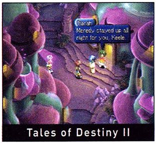
But once I learned how to tweak my strategic setups—which include dozens of options, from very specific tactics, to positions on the battlefield, to the ability to toggle on and off each and every spell or special move—and once I had built up a more solid array of my own special moves, the battles became a real blast. There's something very cool about executing a 20-hit combo or juggling a foe, especially in an RPG. Another nifty extra: **You can plug in up to three other players to take full control of your party**.

Still, as much as I grew to enjoy the battle system, I couldn't shake the sensation that something is missing here. Without a solid story, Tales II lacks that extra *oomph* that's so necessary in an RPG. It's still a good game, well worth playing, but don't expect any magic here.

Final Score ●●●◖

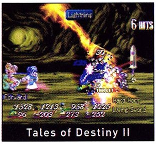
Gary Steinman

Players: 1-4
Memory Card: 1 block



Farah
Merely stayed up all night for you, Keele.

Tales of Destiny II



Tales of Destiny II

Virtual Kasparov

Publisher Titus
Developer Titus
Web Site www.titusgames.com

Honestly, it's not easy to review a chess game. The game is so classic, so simple in design (though of course so very complex in practice), that you don't need great graphics; you don't need good camera angles; you don't need fancy music or sound effects to make a solid game. Take Virtual Kasparov for example: **The 3D boards are nearly impossible to use** due to the lack of any standard sets—shiny metal or strangely stylized stone, none of the little buggers is recognizable, and the colors and low resolution make it all a jumbled blur. But does that really matter? Video chess is always easier to play with a 2D board anyway, and the game at least has one legible example. No, in a game like this the fundamental feature is the AI, and from what my modest chess skills can discern, this is more than adequate.

Of course, most commercial chess games are similar in this respect, and while Kasparov holds its own in this department and in the inclusion of some nice extras (such as an exclusive video interview with Garry Kasparov himself), on the whole its superficial deficiencies hurt it badly: its **disappointingly shallow tutorial mode**, for example, and lack of a simple "undo" option—a necessity in learning chess! I'd look elsewhere.

Final Score ●●

Joe Rybicki

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

PS2 Review Archive

Game names in green indicate a Greatest Hits title. Ratings in red indicate a five-disc score.

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
4x4 EVO	GOD Games	●●●●	44
The Adventures of Cookie & Cream	Agetec	●●●◖	44
Aqua Aqua	3DO	●●	42
All-Star Baseball 2002	Acclaim	●●●◖	45
Armored Core 2	Agetec	●●●	39
Armored Core 2: Another Age	Agetec	●●●◖	48
Army Men Air Attack	3DO	●●●◖	44
Army Men: Green Rogue	3DO	●●	45
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	●●◖	45
ATV Offroad Fury	Sony CEA	●●●●	42
Bloody Roar 3	Activision	●●●◖	47
The Bouncer	Square EA	●●●	42
CART Fury	Midway	●	47
City Crisis	Take 2	●●●	48
Cool Boarders 2001	Sony CEA	●●●●	46
Crazy Taxi	Acclaim	●●●●	46
Dark Cloud	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	46
Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore	Tecmo	●●●●◖	39
Disney's Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers	Ubi Soft	●●●◖	42
Driving Emotion Type-S	Square EA	●●◖	41
Dynasty Warriors 2	Koei	●●●●	38
Escape From Monkey Island	LucasArts	●●●●●	46
Eternal Ring	Agetec	●●	38
ESPN International Track & Field	Konami	●●●	39
ESPN MLS ExtraTime	Konami	●●	44
ESPN NBA 2Night	Konami	●●	42
ESPN National Hockey Night	Konami	●◖	45
ESPN Winter X Games Snowboarding	Konami	●●●	41
Evergrace	Agetec	●●	39
Extermination	Deep Space	●●◖	48
F1 Championship	Ubi Soft	●●●●	43
F1 Championship Season 2000	EA Sports	●●◖	41
Fantavision	Sony CEA	●●●●	40
FIFA 2001 Major League Soccer	EA Sports	●●●●◖	39
Fur Fighters: Viggo's Revenge	Acclaim	●●●	46
Gallop Racer	Tecmo	●●	48
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy	Midway	●●●◖	46
Gradius III and IV	Konami	●●◖	39
Gran Turismo 3: A-spec	SCEA	●●●●●	46
Gungriffon Blaze	Working Designs	●●●◖	39
Heroes of Might and Magic: Quest for the DragonBone Staff	3DO	●●◖	46
High Heat MLB 2002	3DO	●●●●	44
Kengo: Master of Bushido	Crave	●●●	42
Kessen	EA Games	●●●	39
Klonoa 2: Lunatea's Veil	Namco	●●●●◖	47
Knockout Kings 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	42
Le Mans 24 Hours	Infogrames	●●◖	48
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●◖	38
Madden NFL 2002	EA Sports	●●●●◖	48
MDK2 Armageddon	Interplay	●●●◖	45
Midnight Club	Rockstar	●●●●	39
Mobil Suit Gundam: Journey to Jaburo	Bandai	●	48
Moto GP	Namco	●●●●	39
Motor Mayhem	Infogrames	●●●	47
MTV Music Generator 2	Codemasters	●●●	46
MX 2002 featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	●●●●	47
NASCAR 2001	EA Sports	●●◖	40
NASCAR Heat	Infogrames	●●●●	47
NBA Hoopz	Midway	●●●	44
NBA Live 2001	EA Sports	●●●	42
NBA ShootOut 2001	Sony CEA	●●◖	44
NBA Street	EA Sports Big	●●●●●	47
NCAA Final Four 2001	Sony CEA	●	41
NCAA Football 2002	EA Sports	●●●●◖	48
NCAA GameBreaker 2001	Sony CEA	●◖	41
NFL GameDay 2001	Sony CEA	●	40
NHL FaceOff 2001	989 Sports	●●●◖	43
NHL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	38
Oni	Rockstar	●◖	43
Onimusha: Warlords	Capcom	●●●●	43
Orphen: Scion of Sorcery	Activision	●●●	39
Q-Ball Billiards Master	Take 2	●●●◖	40
Quake III Revolution	EA Games	●●●●◖	44
Rayman 2 Revolution	Ubi Soft	●●●●●	41
RC Revenge Pro	Acclaim	●●◖	41
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing Round 2	Midway	●●●●	40
Real Pool	Infogrames	●●●◖	40
Red Faction	THQ	●●●●●	46
Resident Evil - Code: Veronica X	Capcom	●●●●◖	48
Ridge Racer V	Namco	●●●●◖	38
Ring of Red	Konami	●●●●	43
Rugby	EA Sports	●●●◖	48
Rumble Racing	EA Games	●●●●◖	45
Rune: Viking Warlord	Take Two Int.	●●◖	48
Shadow of Destiny	Konami	●●●◖	43
Silent Scope	Konami	●●●	39
Silpheed: The Lost Planet	Working Designs	●●◖	40
Sky Odyssey	Activision	●●●	40
Smuggler's Run	Rockstar	●●●●◖	39
Soccer America: Internation Cup	Hot-B	●●	48
SSX	EA Sports BIG	●●●●●	38
Star Wars: Episode I—Super Bombad Racing	LucasArts	●●	45
Star Wars: Starfighter	LucasArts	●●●●◖	43
Street Fighter EX 3	Capcom	●●●◖	47
Stretch Panic	Conspiracy	●●●◖	39
Summoner	THQ	●●●	39

PS2 Review Archive (cont.)

Game names in green indicate a Greatest Hits title. Ratings in red indicate a five-disc score.

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
Super Bust-A-Move	Acclaim	●●●	41
Surfing H3O	Rockstar	●●	40
Swing Away Golf	EA Games	●●●	38
Tekken Tag Tournament	Namco	●●●●◖	39
Test Drive Off-Road: Wide Open	Infogrames	●●●	48
Theme Park Roller Coaster	EA Games	●●●●	41
Tiger Woods PGA Tour	EA Sports	●●●	44
TimeSplitters	Eidos Int.	●●●●●	39
Tokyo Xtreme Racer Zero	Crave	●●◖	45
Top Gear Dare Devil	Kemco	●●●◖	41
Triple Play Baseball	EA Sports	●●	45
Twisted Metal: Black	SCEA	●●●●●	47
Unison	Tecmo	●●●◖	44
Unreal Tournament	Infogrames	●●◖	40
War Jetz	3DO	●●◖	48
Warriors of Might & Magic	3DO	●●◖	44
Wild Wild Racing	Interplay	●●●	39
Winback	Koei	●●●●	43
World Destruction League: Thunder Tanks	3DO	●●●	42
X Squad	EA Games	●●●◖	38
Z.O.E: Zone of the Enders	Konami	●●●●◖	44

PS one Review Archive

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
007 Racing	EA Games	●●●	41
3Xtreme	989 Studios	●	21
40 Winks	GT Interactive	●●●●	28
102 Dalmatians: Puppies to the Rescue	Eidos	●●●◖	41
A Bug's Life	Sony CEA	●●	15
Ace Combat 2	Namco	●●●●●	1
Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere	Namco	●●●	31
Action Bass	Take Two.	●●	37
Action Man: Operation Extreme	Hasbro	●●●	41
Akuji the Heartless	Crystal Dynamics	●●●	18
Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge	Sony CEA	●●	45
Alexi Lalas International Soccer	Rockstar	●	23
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare	Infogrames	●●●●	47
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	●●●	38
Alundra	Working Designs	●●●●◖	4
Alundra 2	Activision	●●●	32
Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley	ASC	●●●	17
Animorphs: Shattered Reality	Infogrames	●●◖	37
Ape Escape	Sony CEA	●●●●●	22
Apocalypse	Activision	●●●	16
Arcade Party Pak	Midway	●●●◖	28
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Atari Collection 2	Midway	●●◖	7
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Midway Collection 2	Midway	●●	4
Armored Core	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Armored Core: Master of Arena	Agetec	●●	31
Armorines: Project S.W.A.R.M.	Acclaim	◖	35
Army Men 3D	3DO	●●●	20
Army Men Air Attack 2	3DO	●●●◖	39
Army Men: Green Rogue	3DO	●◖	47
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	3DO	●●	32
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	●●◖	40
Army Men: World War	3DO	●◖	34
Army Men World War: Final Front	3DO	●◖	45
Army Men World War: Land, Sea, Air	3DO	●◖	39
Arthur! Ready to Race	The Learning Co.	●	42
Assault	Midway	●●●	15
Asteroids	Activision	●●●◖	16
Atlantis: The Lost Empire	SCEA	●●●●	48
ATV: Quad Power Racing	Acclaim	●	39
Auto Destruct	Electronic Arts	●●●	6
Azure Dreams	Konami	●●●	10
Backstreet Billiards	Ascii	●●●◖	15
Ball Breakers	Take 2	●●●◖	36
Ballistic	Infogrames	●●●●	27
Baseball 2000	Interplay	●●	21
Bass Landing	Agetec	●●●◖	26
Bass Rise	Bandai	●●●	28
Batman: Gotham City Racer	Ubi Soft Games	●◖	46
Batman & Robin	Acclaim	●	13
Batman Beyond: Return of the Joker	Ubi Soft	◖	39
Battle Hunter	Agetec	●◖	48
Battletanx: Global Assault	3DO	●◖	31
Beast Wars	Hasbro Int.	●◖	5
Big Air	Accolade	●◖	20
Big Ol' Bass 2	Konami	●●◖	45
Billiards	Agetec	●●◖	45
Bio F.R.E.A.K.S.	Midway	●●	10
Black Bass with Blue Marlin	Hot-B	●●	29
Blade	Activision	●●◖	41
Blast Lacrosse	Acclaim Sports	●●◖	48
Blast Radius	Psygnosis	●●●◖	19
Blaster Master: Blasting Again	Sunsoft	●●●	38
Blasto	Sony CEA	●●●◖	8
Bloody Roar	Sony CEA	●●●◖	6
Bloody Roar 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	21
Blues Big Musical	THQ	●●●	46
Board Game: Top Shop	Agetec/A1 Games	●●●●	45
Bomberman Fantasy Race	Atlus	●●◖	19
Bomberman Party Edition	Vatical	●●◖	38
Bomberman World	Atlus	●●◖	13
The Bombing Islands	Kemco	●●◖	47
Boombots	SouthPeak	●●◖	27
Bottom of the 9th '97	Konami	●●●◖	1
Bowling	Agetec	●●	43
Boxing	Agetec	●●●	45
Brave Fencer Musashi	Square EA	●●●●	15
Bravo Air Race	THQ	●●●	1
Breakout	Hasbro Int.	●●	39
Breath of Fire III	Capcom	●●●◖	9
Breath of Fire IV	Capcom	●●●◖	40
Brigandine	Atlus	●●●◖	15
Broken Sword	THQ	●●●●	5
Broken Sword II	Crave	●●●◖	27
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling	THQ	●●●◖	13
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling 2	THQ	●●●●	31
Bug Riders	GT Interactive	●●	3
Bugs Bunny Lost In Time	Infogrames	●●●◖	23
Bugs Bunny & Taz: Time Busters	Infogrames	●●●	41
Builder's Block	Jaleco	●●●◖	35
Burstrick Wake Boarding	Natsume	●◖	45
Bushido Blade 2	Square EA	●●●◖	14
Bust A Groove	989 Studios	●●●●	16
Bust A Groove 2	Enix	●●●	36
Bust-A-Move 99	Acclaim	●●	19
Bust-A-Move 4	Natsume	●●●●	17
Buzz Lightyear of Star Command	Activision	●●◖	39
C: The Contra Adventure	Konami	●◖	12
Caesar's Palace II	Interplay	●●	15
Caesar's Palace 2000	Interplay	◖	41
Cardinal SYN	Sony CEA	●●●	9
CART World Series	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Casper: Friends Around the World	Sound Source	●◖	41
Castlevania: SotN	Konami	●●●●●	2
Castrol Honda Superbike	Electronic Arts	●●	21
Centipede	Hasbro Int.	●	22
Championship Bass	EA Sports	●●●●	33
Championship Motocross Featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	●●●◖	25
Championship Motocross 2001 Featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	●●●	41
Championship Surfer	Mattel Int.	●●●	41
Chessmaster II	Mindscape	●●●◖	23
Chicken Run	Eidos	●●●	41
Chocobo Racing	Square EA	●●●	23
Chocobo's Dungeon 2	Square EA	●●◖	29
Chrono Cross	Square EA	●●●●●	36
Circuit Breakers	Mindscape	●●●	12
Civilization II	Activision	●●●●◖	18
Clock Tower	Ascii	●●●	2
Clock Tower II: The Struggle Within	Agetec	●●◖	28
Colin McRae Rally	Sony CEA	●●●●	30
Colin McRae Rally 2	Codemasters	●●●●●	40
Colony Wars	Psygnosis	●●●●●	4
Colony Wars: Red Sun	Psygnosis	●●●●◖	31
Colony Wars: Vengeance	Psygnosis	●●●◖	14
Command & Conquer: Red Alert	Virgin	●●●◖	4
Contender	Sony CEA	●●●●	17
Contender 2	Bam!	●	41
Cool Boarders 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	3
Cool Boarders 3	989 Studios	●●●	14
Cool Boarders 4	989 Studios	●●●	27
Cool Boarders 2001	Sony CEA	●	39
Countdown Vampires	Bandai	●◖	32
Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn	Activision	●●◖	34
Crash Bandicoot 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	3
Crash Bandicoot: WARPED	Sony CEA	●●●●●	15
Crash Bash	SCEA/Universal	●●◖	39
Crime Killer	Interplay	●●●	12
Critical Depth	GT Interactive	●●●	3
Croc	Fox Interactive	●●●●	1
Croc 2	Fox Interactive	●●◖	22
Crusaders of Might & Magic	3DO	●●●	30
CTR: Crash Team Racing	Sony CEA	●●●●●	26
CyberTiger	EA Sports	●●●●	27
Dance Dance Revolution	Konami	●●●●	42
Danger Girl	THQ	●●◖	39
Dark Omen	Electronic Arts	●●	9
DarkStalkers	Capcom	●●●●	16
Darkstone	Take 2 Int.	●●●◖	43
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX	Acclaim Max	●●●◖	38
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX: Maximum Remix	Acclaim Max	●●◖	47
Dead in the Water	ASC	●●◖	17
Dead or Alive	Tecmo	●●●●◖	8
Deathtrap Dungeon	Eidos	●●◖	9
Deception III: Dark Delusion	Tecmo	●●●●	31
Demolition Racer	Infogrames	●●●●	26
Destrega	Koei	●●●●	16
Destruction Derby Raw	Midway	●●●●	39
Devil Dice	THQ	●●●◖	13
Diablo	Electronic Arts	●●●●	8
Die Hard Trilogy: Viva Las Vegas	Fox Interactive	●●	31
Digimon Digital Card Battle	Bandai	●●●	48
Digimon World	Bandai	●◖	36
Digimon World 2	Bandai	●●	46
Dino Crisis	Capcom	●●●●	25
Dino Crisis 2	Capcom	●●●●◖	38
Disney's Dinosaur	Ubi Soft	●◖	36
Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers	Ubi Soft	●●●	39
Downhill Mountain Bike Racing	Activision	●●◖	27
Dracula: The Resurrection	DreamCatcher	●●◖	48
Dragon Tales: Dragon Seek	NewKidCo	●◖	45
Dragon Valor	Namco	●●●	38
DragonBall GT	Bandai	●●	4
Dragonseeds	Jaleco	●●	15
Driver	GT Interactive	●●●●	24
Driver 2	Infogrames	●●●●	40
Ducati World Championship Racing	Acclaim	●●◖	41
Duke Nukem: Land of the Babes	Infogrames	●●◖	40
Duke Nukem: Time to Kill	GT Interactive	●●●◖	14
Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown	GT Interactive	●●●	5
Dukes of Hazzard	SouthPeak	●◖	29
Dukes of Hazzard II: Daisy Dukes it Out	SouthPeak	●●	41
Dune 2000	Electronic Arts	●◖	27
EA Sports Supercross	EA Sports	●●●◖	41
Eagle One: Harrier Attack	Infogrames	●●●	32
Echo Night	Agetec	●●●	23
ECW Anarchy Rulz	Acclaim	●	38
ECW Hardcore Revolution	Acclaim	●◖	30
Ehrgeiz	Square EA	●●●◖	21
Einhänder	Sony CEA	●●●●	8
Elemental Gearbolt	Working Designs	●●●●	11
Eliminator	Psygnosis	●◖	20
The Emperor's New Groove	SCEA	●●●◖	40
ESPN MLS GameNight	Konami	●●●	40
Eternal Eyes	Sunsoft	●◖	38
Evil Dead: Hail to the King	THQ	●●◖	41
Evil Zone	Titus	●●●	25
Expendable	Infogrames	●◖	34
F1 2000	EA Sports	●●●◖	33
F1 Championship Season	EA Sports	●●●◖	40
F1 Racing Championship	Ubi Soft	●●◖	39
Family Feud	Hasbro Int.	●●●	39
Family Game Pack	3DO	●●◖	33
Fantastic Four	Acclaim	●●	3
Fatal Fury: Wild Ambition	SNK	●◖	30
Fear Effect	Eidos	●●●●◖	31
Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix	Eidos	●●●●◖	43
Felony 11-79	Ascii	●●●	1
FIFA 98	EA Sports	●●●◖	4
FIFA 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	17
FIFA 2000	EA Sports	●●●●◖	27
FIFA 2001 Major League Soccer	EA Sports	●●●●◖	39
The Fifth Element	Activision	◖	15
Fighter Maker	Agetec	●●●◖	21
Fighting Force	Eidos	●●●	3
Fighting Force 2	Eidos	●●	29
Final Fantasy Anthology	Square EA	●●●●◖	26
Final Fantasy Chronicles	Sony CEA	●●●●	47
Final Fantasy Tactics	Sony CEA	●●●●	5
Final Fantasy VII	Sony CEA	●●●●●	1
Final Fantasy VIII	Square EA	●●●●●	25
Final Fantasy IX	Square EA	●●●●●	39
Fisherman's Bait	Konami	●●●◖	18
Fisherman's Bait 2: Big Ol' Bass	Konami	●●●	27
Flintstones Bedrock Bowling	SouthPeak	●	37
Ford Racing	Empire	●●◖	44
Formula 1 '98	Psygnosis	●●●●	15
Formula 1 '99	Psygnosis	●●●◖	28
Forsaken	Acclaim	●●●●	10
Fox Sports Golf '99	Fox Interactive	●●	11
Fox Sports Soccer '99	Fox Interactive	●●◖	11
Freestyle Boardin' '99	Capcom	●●◖	18
Freestyle Motocross: McGrath vs. Pastrana	Acclaim	●●◖	40
Frogger	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	4
Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge	Hasbro Int.	●●●	38
Front Mission 3	Square EA	●●●●◖	31
Future Cop L.A.P.D.	Electronic Arts	●●●	13
G-Police	Psygnosis	●●●●◖	3
G-Police 2	Psygnosis	●●●●	25
G.Darius	THQ	●●●●	13
Galaga: Destination Earth	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	39
Galerians	Crave	●●●	33
Gallop Racer	Tecmo	●●◖	28
Gauntlet Legends	Midway	●●◖	32
Gekido	Interplay	●●●	34
Gex: Deep Cover Gecko	Eidos	●●●◖	20
Gex: Enter the Gecko	Midway	●●●◖	7
Ghost in the Shell	THQ	●●●●	4
Glover	Hasbro Int.	●●	28
Gold and Glory: The Road to El Dorado	Revolution	●●	42
Gran Turismo	Sony CEA	●●●●●	9
Gran Turismo 2	Sony CEA	●●●●●	29
Grand Theft Auto	Take 2	●●◖	10
Grand Theft Auto 2	Rockstar	●●●	27
Grand Theft Auto: London 1969	Rockstar	●●◖	22
Grand Tour Racing '98	Activision	●●●	1
Grandia	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	26
Granstream Saga	THQ	●●●	10
The Grinch	Konami/Universal	●◖	39
Grind Session	Sony CEA	●●●●	34
Grudge Warriors	Take 2	●●	34
Guardian's Crusade	Activision	●●●	19
Gundam Battle Assault	Bandai	●●●	40
HardBall '99	Accolade	●◖	15
Harvest Moon: Back to Nature	Natsume	●●●◖	40
HBO Boxing	Acclaim	●●	41
Heart of Darkness	Interplay	●●●●	13
Hello Kitty's Cube Frenzy	NewKidCo	●●◖	20
Herc's Adventures	LucasArts	●●●	2
High Heat Baseball 2000	3DO	●	22
High Heat Major League Baseball 2002	3DO	●●●●	43
Hogs of War	Infogrames	●●●●	38
Hot Shots Golf	Sony CEA	●●●●	7
Hot Shots Golf 2	Sony CEA	●●●◖	30
Hot Wheels Turbo Racing	Electronic Arts	●●◖	25
Hydro Thunder	Midway	●●	31
Incredible Crisis	Titus	●●●◖	38
Intelligent Qube	Sony CEA	●●●	2
Intellivision Classic Games	Activision	●◖	28
Int. Superstar Soccer '98	Konami	●●●●◖	11
Int. Track & Field 2000	Konami	●●●●	27
Invasion From Beyond	GT Interactive	●●	19
Iron Soldier 3	Vatical	●●●●	35
Irritating Stick	Jaleco	●●●	18
ISS Pro Evolution	Konami	●●●●◖	35
Jackie Chan Stuntmaster	Midway	●●●◖	30
Jade Cocoon	Crave	●●●◖	23
Jarrett & LaBonte Stock Car Racing	Codemasters	●●●●	38
Jeopardy!	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	17
Jeopardy! 2	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	29
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000	Acclaim	●◖	38
Jersey Devil	Sony CEA	●●	10
Jet Moto 2	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Jet Moto 3	989 Studios	●●●◖	26
Jimmy Johnson VR Football	Interplay	●●	2
Jojo's Bizarre Adventure	Capcom	●●●●◖	31
Juggernaut	Jaleco	●●	26
K-1 Grand Prix	Jaleco	●●●◖	28
K-1 Revenge	Jaleco	●●◖	18
Kagero: Deception II	Tecmo	●●●●◖	14
Kartia	Atlus	●●●●	12
Kensei Sacred Fist	Konami	●◖	17
Killer Loop	Crave	●●●	27
King of Fighters '99	Agetec	●●●●	41
KISS Pinball	Take 2	●◖	46
Klonoa	Namco	●●●●●	6
Knockout Kings	EA Sports	●●●◖	16
Knockout Kings	EA Sports	●●●●	39
Knockout Kings 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	27
Konami Arcade Classics	Konami	●●◖	23
Koudelka	Infogrames	●●●	35
Kurt Warner's Arena Football Unleashed	Midway	●●●	34
The Land Before Time: Great Valley Racing Adv.	TDK Mediactive	●●●	46
The Land Before Time: Return to the Great Valley	Sound Source	●●◖	39
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	Eidos	●●●●◖	25
The Legend of Dragoon	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	34
Legend of Legaia	Sony CEA	●●●●	19
Legend of Mana	Square EA	●●◖	35
Lego Island 2: The Brickster's Revenge	Lego Media	●●◖	46
Lego Rock Raiders	Lego Media	●	37
The Lion King: Simba's Mighty Adventure	Paradox	●◖	42
The Little Mermaid II	THQ	●●●●	39
Lode Runner	Natsume	●●◖	4
Looney Tunes Racing	Infogrames	●●◖	39
The Lost World: Jurassic Park	Electronic Arts	●	2
Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete	Working Designs	●●●●◖	22
Lunar 2: Eternal Blue Complete	Working Designs	●●●●	40
Madden NFL 98	EA Sports	●●●●	2
Madden NFL 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	13
Madden NFL 2000	EA Sports	●●●●●	25
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●●	37
Marvel SH vs. Street Fighter	Capcom	●●●◖	18
Marvel Superheroes	Capcom	●●	2
Marvel Vs. Capcom EX	Capcom	●●◖	30
Mary-Kate and Ashley: Magical Mystery Mall	Acclaim	●●●◖	40
Mary-Kate and Ashley: Winners Circle	Acclaim	●●◖	45
Mass Destruction	ASC	●●◖	3
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX	Activision	●●●●	45
Maximum Force	Midway	●◖	2
MDK	Playmates	●●◖	3
Medal Of Honor	Electronic Arts	●●●●	27
Medal Of Honor Underground	Electronic Arts	●●●●	39
MediEvil	Sony CEA	●●●●	14
MediEvil II	Sony CEA	●●●◖	32

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Game names in green indicate a Greatest Hits title. Ratings in red indicate a five-disc score.

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
Mega Man Legends	Capcom	●●●●	12
Mega Man Legends 2	Capcom	●●●◖	39
Mega Man X4	Capcom	●●●	4
Mega Man X5	Capcom	●●●◖	41
Metal Gear Solid	Konami	●●●●●	14
Metal Gear Solid VR Missions	Konami	●●●●	25
Metal Slug X	Agetec	●●●●	43
Micro Machines	Midway	●●●●●	5
Micro Maniacs	Codemasters	●●●●	32
Mike Tyson Boxing	Codemasters	●●	39
The Misadventures of Tron Bonne	Capcom	●●●●	31
Miss Spider's Tea Party	Simon & Schuster	●●●	41
Mission: Impossible	Infogrames	●●	28
Missile Command	Hasbro Int.	●●●	28
MK Mythologies	Midway	●●◖	3
MLB 98	Sony CEA	●●●	1
MLB 99	Sony CEA	●●●●	9
MLB 2000	989 Studios	●●●●	21
MLB 2001	989 Studios	●●●	33
MLB 2002	Sony CEA	●●	46
MLBPA Bottom of the 9th '99	Konami	●●●◖	12
Mobil 1: Rally Championship	Electronic Arts	●●●	32
Monaco Grand Prix	Ubi Soft	●●●◖	21
Monkey Hero	Take 2	●●	18
Monkey Magic	Sunsoft	●	29
Monopoly	Hasbro Int.	●●●	5
Monster Rancher 2	Tecmo	●●●●	26
Monster Rancher Battle Card: Episode II	Tecmo	●●●◖	36
Monster Rancher Hop-A-Bout	Tecmo	●●●◖	41
Monster Seed	Sunsoft	●●◖	20
Mort the Chicken	Crave	●◖	41
Mortal Kombat: Special Forces	Midway	●◖	36
Mortal Kombat 4	Midway	●●●◖	11
Moto Racer	Electronic Arts	●●●●●	3
Moto Racer 2	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	14
Moto Racer World Tour	Infogrames	●●●●	40
Motocross Mania	Take 2 Int.	●	48
Motorhead	Fox Interactive	●●●◖	14
Mr. Domino	Acclaim	●●●◖	15
Mr. Driller	Namco	●●●●	33
Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness	Namco	●●●●	38
MTV Music Generator	Codemasters	●●●●	28
MTV Sports: Pure Ride	THQ	●●●◖	39
MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX	THQ	●●	45
MTV Sports: Skateboarding featuring Andy MacDonald	THQ	●	39
The Mummy	Konami	●●◖	41
Muppet Monster Adventure	Midway	●●●●	39
Muppet Race Mania	Midway	●●●◖	39
N20	Fox Interactive	●●	11
Nagano Winter Olympics '98	Konami	●●	6
NASCAR 98	EA Sports	●●●●	3
NASCAR 99	Electronic Arts	●●●●	14
NASCAR 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	26
NASCAR 2001	EA Sports	●●◖	38
NASCAR Heat	Hasbro Int.	●●●◖	40
NASCAR Rumble	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	31
NBA Fastbreak '98	Midway	●●◖	4
NBA Hoopz	Midway	●●●	43
NBA In the Zone '98	Konami	●●◖	7
NBA In the Zone '99	Konami	●●●◖	19
NBA In the Zone 2000	Konami	●●◖	28
NBA Live 98	EA Sports	●●●●◖	3
NBA Live 99	EA Sports	●●●●	16
NBA Live 2000	EA Sports	●●●●◖	28
NBA Live 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	39
NBA ShootOut 98	Sony CEA	●●●◖	8
NBA ShootOut 2000	989 Studios	●●●	30
NBA ShootOut 2001	989 Studios	●●◖	39
NBA Showtime NBA on NBC	Midway	●●●	28
NBA Tonight	ESPN Digita	●●●	14
NCAA Final Four '99	989 Studios	●●●◖	18
NCAA Final Four 2000	989 Studios	●●●◖	28
NCAA Final Four 2001	Sony CEA	●●	40
NCAA Football 98	EA Sports	●●	2
NCAA Football 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	12
NCAA Football 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	25
NCAA Football 2001	EA Sports	●●●◖	36
NCAA GameBreaker 98	Sony CEA	●●●●	4
NCAA GameBreaker 99	989 Studios	●●●●	15
NCAA GameBreaker 2000	989 Studios	●●●	25
NCAA GameBreaker 2001	Sony CEA	●●◖	37
NCAA March Madness 98	EA Sports	●●●●	7
NCAA March Madness 99	EA Sports	●●●	18
NCAA March Madness 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	29
NCAA March Madness 2001	EA Sports	●●	41
Nectaris: Military Madness	Jaleco	●●●●	17
Need for Speed III	Electronic Arts	●●●●	8
Need for Speed: High Stakes	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	20
Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	33
Need for Speed: V-Rally	Electronic Arts	●◖	3
Need for Speed: V-Rally 2	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	28
Newman/Haas Racing	Psygnosis	●●	7
The Next Tetris	Hasbro Int.	●●●	24
NFL Blitz	Midway	●●●●●	13
NFL Blitz 2000	Midway	●●●●●	24
NFL Blitz 2001	Midway	●●●◖	38
NFL GameDay 98	Sony CEA	●●●●●	1
NFL GameDay 99	989 Studios	●●●●	13
NFL GameDay 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	25
NFL GameDay 2001	989 Sports	●●◖	37
NFL Xtreme	989 Studios	●●	11
NFL Xtreme 2	989 Studios	●◖	24
N.GEN Racing	Infogrames	●●◖	35
NHL 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	15
NHL 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	26
NHL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	38
NHL Blades of Steel 2000	Konami	●●	28
NHL Breakaway 98	Acclaim	●●●	2
NHL Championship 2000	Fox Interactive	●●●	27
NHL FaceOff 98	Sony CEA	●●●●●	2
NHL FaceOff 99	989 Studios	●●●●	14
NHL FaceOff 2000	989 Studios	●●●●	26
NHL FaceOff 2001	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	38
NHL Rock the Rink	Electronic Arts	●●●●	32
Nick Toons Racing	Infogrames	●●●	48
Nightmare Creatures	Activision	●●●◖	3
Nightmare Creatures II	Konami	●●	33
Ninja: Shadow of Darkness	Eidos	●◖	15
Nuclear Strike	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	3
O.D.T.	Psygnosis	●◖	15
Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus	GT Interactive	●●●●◖	15
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee	GT Interactive	●●●●	1
One	ASC	●●●●	4
Pac-Man World	Namco	●●●●◖	25
Pandemonium! 2	Midway	●●●◖	3
PaRappa the Rapper	Sony CEA	●●●●●	2
Parasite Eve	Square EA	●●●●	12
Parasite Eve II	Square EA	●●●●◖	37
Persona 2: Eternal Punishment	Atlus	●●●●	41
Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee Golf	Infogrames	●●●◖	41
PGA Tour 98	EA Sports	●●●	3
Pitfall 3D	Activision	●●	9
Play With The Teletubbies	Knowledge Ad.	●●	36
Pocket Fighter	Capcom	●●●●	11
Point Blank	Namco	●●●◖	6
Point Blank 2	Namco	●●●◖	20
Point Blank 3	Namco	●●●◖	44
Polaris SnoCross	Vatical	●●◖	38
Pong	Hasbro Int.	●●●◖	27
Pool Hustler	Activision	●●●●	15
Populous: The Beginning	Electronic Arts	●◖	21
Porsche Challenge	Sony CEA	●●●◖	1
Power Rangers Lightspeed Rescue	THQ	●◖	40
Power Soccer 2	Psygnosis	●●●	5
Power Spike Pro Beach Volleyball	Infogrames	●●◖	41
Poy Poy	Konami	●●●	3
Pro 18 World Tour Golf	Psygnosis	●●	19
Pro Pinball: Big Race USA	Empire Int.	●●●◖	37
Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey	Empire Int.	●●●◖	37
Pro Pinball: Timeshock!	Take 2	●	10
Psybadek	Psygnosis	●●	15
Punky Skunk	Jaleco	●●●	6
Puzzle Star Sweep	Agetec	●●◖	43
Q*bert	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	28
Quake II	Activision	●●●●	27
R-Type Delta	Agetec	●●●●◖	23
R-Types	Ascii	●●●◖	17
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	Namco	●●●●	20
Railroad Tycoon II	Take 2	●●●	30
Rainbow Six	Red Storm	●	27
Rally Cross 2	989 Studios	●●●◖	15
Rampage	Midway	●●◖	4
Rampage 2: Universal Tour	Midway	●	21
Rampage Through Time	Midway	●◖	36
Ray Tracers	THQ	●●●	5
RayCrisis	Spaz/W.D.	●●●	38
Rayman 2: The Great Escape	Ubi Soft	●●●●	35
Razor Freestyle Scooter	Crave	●●●	41
RC de GO!	Acclaim	●●●●	40
RC Revenge	Acclaim	●●●◖	37
RC Stunt Copter	Titus	●●●●	25
Re-Volt	Acclaim	●●	26
Ready 2 Rumble	Midway	●●●◖	27
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing Round 2	Midway	●●●	40
Red Asphalt	Interplay	●◖	3
Reel Fishing	Natsume	●●●	3
Reel Fishing II	Natsume	●●	34
Resident Evil 2	Capcom	●●●●●	6
Resident Evil 2 Dual Shock	Capcom	●●●●●	13
Resident Evil 3 Nemesis	Capcom	●●●●◖	27
Resident Evil: Director's Cut	Capcom	●●●	2
Resident Evil Survivor	Capcom	●◖	38
Rhapsody: A Musical Adventure	Atlus	●●●	35
Rising Zan	Agetec	●●●●	24
Risk	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	11
Rival Schools	Capcom	●●●●	14
Riven: The Sequel to Myst	Acclaim	●●●●●	6
Road Rash 3D	Electronic Arts	●●●	11
Road Rash: Jail Break	Electronic Arts	●●	30
Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots	Mattel Int.	●●●	41
Rogue Trip	GT Interactive	●●●◖	14
Roll Away	Psygnosis	●●●●◖	13
Rollcage	Psygnosis	●●●◖	19
Rollcage Stage II	Psygnosis	●●●◖	31
Romance of the 3 Kingdoms VI	Koei	●●	30
Roswell Conspiracies: Aliens, Myths & Legends	Red Storm	●	48
RPG Maker	Agetec	●●●●◖	35
Rugrats: Totally Angelica	THQ	●●●◖	48
Rugrats in Paris: The Movie	THQ	●●●	41
Runabout 2	HotB	●	36
Running Wild	989 Studios	●●	14
Rushdown	Electronic Arts	●●	19
Sabrina, the Teenage Witch: A Twitch in Time!	Knowledge Adven.	◖	45
SaGa Frontier	Sony CEA	●●●◖	8
SaGa Frontier 2	Square EA	●●●◖	29
Saiyuki: Journey West	Koei	●●●◖	47
Sammy Sosa High Heat Baseball 2001	3DO	●●	32
Sammy Sosa Softball Slam	3DO	●●	33
Samurai Shodown: Warrior's Rage	SNK	●◖	36
Scrabble	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	28
Sentinel Returns	Psygnosis	●●	11
Shadow Madness	Crave	●●◖	19
Shadow Man	Acclaim	●◖	27
Shadow Master	Psygnosis	●●●●	5
Shadow Tower	Agetec	◖	28
Shanghai: True Valor	Sunsoft	●●●	20
Sheep	Empire Int.	●●●	41
Shipwreckers	Psygnosis	●●●	3
Shooter: Space Shot	Agetec/A1	●●●◖	48
Shooter: Starfighter Sanvein	Agetec	●●	43
Silent Bomber	Bandai	●●●●	30
Silent Hill	Konami	●●●●	18
Silhouette Mirage	Working Designs	●●●◖	29
Sim Theme Park	Electronic Arts	●●◖	33
The Simpsons Wrestling	Activision	●●	45
Skullmonkeys	Electronic Arts	●●●●●	6
Sled Storm	Electronic Arts	●●●●	24
Small Soldiers	Electronic Arts	●◖	15
Smurfs	Infogrames	●●●●	29
Smurf Racer	Infogrames	●●	45
Sno-Cross Championship Racing	Crave	●◖	37
Soul of the Samurai	Konami	●◖	24
South Park	Acclaim	●◖	27
South Park Rally	Acclaim	●◖	29
South Park: Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	●	28
Snowboarding	Agetec	●●	43
Space Invaders	Activision	●●●	27
Spawn: The Eternal	Sony CEA	●●	4
Spec Ops	Take 2 Int.	●	34
Spec Ops: Ranger Elite	Take 2 Int.	●	46
Speed Punks	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	32
Speed Racer	Jaleco	●●	8
Speedball 2100	Empire	●●◖	40
Spider-Man	Activision	●●●●●	37
Spin Jam	Take 2 Int.	●◖	38
Sports Car GT	Electronic Arts	●●◖	21
Spyro: Year of the Dragon	Sony CEA	●●●●●	39
Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage!	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	27
Spyro the Dragon	Sony CEA	●●●●	13
Star Ocean: The 2nd Story	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	22
Star Trek: Invasion	Activision	●●●●◖	37
Star Wars: Episode I—Jedi Power Battles	LucasArts	●●◖	33
Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace	LucasArts	●●●	25
Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi	LucasArts	●●●	4
Star Wars Demolition	LucasArts	●●●◖	41
Steel Reign	Sony CEA	●●●	2
Streak	GT Interactive	●●◖	15
Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	●●●●●	21
Street Fighter Collection	Capcom	●●●	4
Street Fighter Collection 2	Capcom	●●●	16
Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha	Capcom	●●●●	2
Street Fighter EX2 Plus	Capcom	●●●	33
Street Sk8er	Electronic Arts	●●◖	19
Street Sk8er 2	Electronic Arts	●●●	32
Strider 2	Capcom	●●●◖	34
Striker Pro 2000	Infogrames	●●●●	33
Strikers 1945	Agetec	●●◖	44
Suikoden II	Konami	●●●●	26
Superbike 2000	EA Sports	●◖	32
SuperCross 2000	EA Sports	●◖	29
SuperCross Circuit	989 Studios	●●●◖	28
Surf Riders	Ubi Soft	●◖	35
Sydney 2000	Eidos	●●	38
Syphon Filter	989 Studios	●●●●	18
Syphon Filter 2	989 Studios	●●●◖	31
T'ai Fu	Activision	●◖	19
T.R.A.G.	Sunsoft	●●●	20
Tactics Ogre	Atlus	●●●◖	12
Tail Concerto	Atlus	●●●◖	26
Tales of Destiny	Namco	●●●●	13
Tarzan	Sony CEA	●●●◖	24
Team Buddies	Midway	●●●◖	38
Team LOSI RC Racing	Fox Interactive	●●◖	13
Tekken 3	Namco	●●●●●	9
Tenchu	Activision	●●●●	14
Tenchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassins	Activision	●●●	37
Tennis Arena	Ubi Soft	●●◖	4
Test Drive 4	Accolade	●●●◖	3
Test Drive 5	Accolade	●●●◖	15
Test Drive 6	Infogrames	●●●◖	27
Test Drive Le Mans	Infogrames	●●◖	34
Test Drive: Off Road 3	Infogrames	●●	26
Thousand Arms	Atlus	●●●●	26
Thrasher: Skate & Destroy	Rockstar	●●●◖	29
Threads of Fate	Square EA	●●●◖	35
Thunder Force V	Working Designs	●●●	13
Tiger Woods 99 PGA Tour Golf	EA Sports	●●●●	16
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001	EA Sports	●●●◖	41
Tigger's Honey Hunt	NewKid Co	●●●●	41
Time Crisis: Project Titan	Namco	●●●	45
Tiny Tank	Sony CEA	●●◖	16
Tiny Toons: The Great Beanstalk	NewKidCo	●●●●	18
TOCA 2	Activision	●●●●◖	27
Tom and Jerry in House Trap	Eidos	●●◖	41
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear	Red Storm	●●◖	45
Tomb Raider II	Eidos	●●●●◖	4
Tomb Raider III	Eidos	●●●◖	16
Tomb Raider: Chronicles	Eidos	●●◖	41
Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation	Eidos	●●●●	29
Tomba!	Sony CEA	●●●●	11
Tomba! 2: The Evil Swine Return	Sony CEA	●●●●	29
Tomorrow Never Dies	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	28
Tonka Space Station	Hasbro	●●◖	41
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Activision	●●●●◖	26
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Activision	●●●●●	38
Toonstein: Dare to Scare	Vatical	●●◖	29
Torneko: The Last Hope	Enix	●●	40
Toy Story 2	Activision	●●●	28
Toy Story Racer	Activision	●●●	44
Transformers: Beast Wars Transmetals	Bam! Interactive	●	36
Trap Gunner	Atlus	●●◖	13
Treasures of the Deep	Namco	●●●●	1
Trick'N Snowboarder	Capcom	●◖	25
Triple Play 99	EA Sports	●●◖	9
Triple Play 2000	EA Sports	●●●●◖	20
Triple Play 2001	EA Sports	●●●●●	32
Triple Play Baseball	EA Sports	●●●●●	32
Turbo Prop Racing	Sony CEA	●●●	11
Twisted Metal III	989 Studios	●●◖	16
Twisted Metal 4	989 Studios	●●●●	28
Tyco RC: Assault With a Battery	Mattel Int.	●●	38
Ultimate 8-Ball	THQ	●●●●	22
Ultimate Fighting Championship	Crave	●●◖	40
Um Jammer Lammy	Sony CEA	●●●◖	24
The Unholy War	Eidos	●●●	14
Uprising X	3DO	●●●	17
Urban Chaos	Eidos	●●	33
Vagrant Story	Square EA	●●●◖	33
Valkyrie Profile	Enix	●●●●	36
Vampire Hunter D	Jaleco	●●	37
Vanark	Jaleco	●●●	32
Vandal Hearts II	Konami	●●●◖	27
Vanguard Bandits	Working Designs	●●◖	33
Vanishing Point	Acclaim	●●●◖	44
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Vigilante 8	Activision	●●●●	10
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Vs.	THQ	●	3
Walt Disney's Jungle Book Rhythm n' Groove	Ubi Soft	●●●	41
Walt Disney World Quest Magical Racing Tour	Eidos	●●◖	33
War Jets	3DO	●●	48
WarGames: DefCon 1	MGM Interactive	●●●●	12
Warpath: Jurassic Park	Electronic Arts	●●	27
Warriors of Might and Magic	3DO	●●●	41
Warzone 2100	Eidos	●●●●	22
WCW Backstage Assault	EA Games	●●	40
WCW Mayhem	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	26
WCW Nitro	THQ	●●◖	5
WCW/nWo Thunder	THQ	●	17
Wheel of Fortune	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	17
Wheel of Fortune 2	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	39
Who Wants to Be a Millionaire	Sony CEA	●●◖	35
Who Wants to Be a Millionaire: 3rd Edition	Sony CEA	●◖	47
Wild 9	Shiny/Interplay	●●●◖	15
Wild Arms 2	Sony CEA	●●●◖	33
The Wild Thornberrys: Animal Adv.	Mattel Int.	●◖	41
WipeOut 3	Psygnosis	●●●●	26
Woody Woodpecker Racing	Konami	●●	40
World Cup 98	EA Sports	●●●	10
World Destruction League: Thunder Tanks	3DO	◖	39
The World Is Not Enough	Electronic Arts	●●●	40
World's Scariest Police Chases	Activision	●●	47
Worms Armageddon	Hasbro Int.	●●●◖	27
Wu-Tang Shaolin Style	Activision	●●●	28
WWF Attitude	Acclaim	●●●●	24
WWF SmackDown!	THQ	●●●●◖	31
WWF SmackDown! 2: Know Your Role	THQ	●●●●●	40
WWF War Zone	Acclaim	●●●●	12
X Games Pro Boarder	ESPN Digital	●●●●	14
X-Files	Fox Interactive	●●●	28
X-Men: Children of the Atom	Acclaim	●●	6
X-Men: Mutant Academy	Activision	●●●	36
Xena: Warrior Princess	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	26
Xenogears	Square EA	●●●●	14
You Don't Know Jack!	Berkeley Systems	●●●●◖	25
You Don't Know Jack! Mock 2	Sierra On-Line	●●	40

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EXPERT GAMER

Special thanks to Expert Gamer for providing tricks and strategy materials.

Top Secret Agents

Greg Sewart, Terry Minnich,
Andy Baran, Sam Kennedy, Chris Baker

Tricks, tricks and more tricks. That's what we want from you. If you've got a tip, a cheat or a code, tell us here: ***OPM@ziffdavis.com****. Or shout into the night air. We'll hear you.*

GRAN TURISMO™ 3

Keeping the drive alive with the latest GT3 tips

GRAN TURISMO 3

MASTER DRAFTER

So you've made it to Area C in Arcade mode and you've come up against the Test Course. If you're using the standard issue Arcade cars, this particular race can be maddening. You can't outpower your competition on this long, high-speed track.

First, choose the Castrol Supra. Now, off the start, work your way up to second and tuck right in behind the guy in first. Whatever you do, DON'T PASS HIM. Ride his bumper all the way around the track.

Now, as you come through the final turn on the final lap, drop back a bit, but stay in the lead car's wake. Once you're back on the straight section of the course, jam the throttle all the way down and suck right up onto his rear bumper again. At the last second, pull to the left. If you do this right, your extra momentum should take you past the leader and get you a win on the Test Course.

LUBE IT UP

What's the cheapest upgrade for any car? A quick oil change, of course. We've told you before that your car loses power as the oil in it gets old. But we recently discovered that changing the oil on a brand-new car immediately ups your horsepower by around 15. Weird, we know, but important nonetheless.

TRICKS FROM THE 10 BEST-SELLING PS2 GAMES

❶ GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

Unlock tracks in Arcade Mode

Here's the deal if you want to unlock tracks. Beat each tier listed below on easy mode and that will open the next tier. Keep winning and you'll keep unlocking tracks.

Tier 1:
Super Speedway, Midfield Raceway, Smokey Mountain, Swiss Alps, Trial Mountain, Midfield Raceway II

Tier 2:
Smokey Mountain II, Tokyo R246, Grand Valley Speedway, Laguna Seca Raceway, Rome Circuit, Tahiti Circuit.

Tier 3:
Swiss Alps II, Trial Mountain II, Deep Forest Raceway II, Special Stage Route 5, Seattle Circuit, Test Course.

Unlocking a few new rides

White Mine's Lancer Evolution VI
Win the Amateur Race of Turbo Sports to get this one into your car arsenal.

Yellow Honda Civic SiR-II EG
Win Beginner Type R Meeting to unlock this ride.

❷ NBA STREET

Getting your hands on special teams

You'll unlock some seriously sweet teams if you beat the bejesus out of Hold the Court. After you reach certain milestones you'll unlock certain teams. Here's how it breaks down:

Win 10 games: unlock Team BIG
Win 20 games: unlock Team 3LW
Win 30 games: unlock Team NYC Legends
Win 40 games: unlock Team Street Legends
Beat all Challenges: unlock Team Dream

Playing with a new set of balls

Before you hit the court, you'll have a chance to key in some codes. Here are a few to get you started:

ABA Ball: Ball, Record, Record, Ball
WNBA Ball: Ball, Record, Shoe, Ball
Soccer Ball: Ball, Shoe, Record, Ball
Beach Ball: Ball, Record, Record, Shoe
Volley Ball: Ball, Record, Record, Megaphone
Medicine Ball: Ball, Record, Record, Basket

❸ TWISTED METAL: BLACK

Cheating to win

Infinite Ammo
For unlimited firepower, hold all shoulder buttons then press Up, X, Left, Circle.

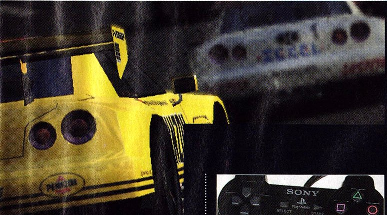
Invincibility
Ready to ruin the fun? During gameplay, including Story Mode, hold all shoulder buttons, then press Right, Left, Down, Up.

Mega Machine Guns
To get your gun-on, hold all shoulder buttons and press X, X, Triangle.

One-Hit Kills
One time's the charm if you hold all shoulder buttons and press X twice, and Up while playing. A note at the top of the screen will let you know if you did it correctly.

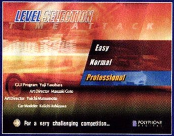
❹ MX 2002 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

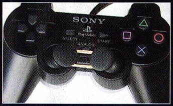
A few tricks to spice up the race



PROFESSIONAL MODE

Arcade mode not giving you a challenge? Wish you were racing the other drivers instead of the track? No problem. Next time you start Arcade mode and choose your difficulty, hold down L1 and R1. "Hard" should change to "Professional." Now you'll have to run 10 laps on whatever track you choose, with tire wear on and a much more aggressive set of computer opponents. Good luck.

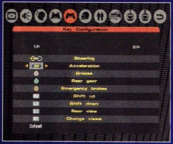

LEVEL SELECTION
TIME ATTACK
Easy
Normal
Professional
GUI Program Yuji Yasuhara
Art Director Masaaki Goto
Art Director Yuichi Matsumoto
Car Modeler Keiichi Ashizawa
For a very challenging competition...
POLYPHONY DIGITAL



ELASTICITY

Making some extra cash just got a whole lot easier. Enter the 150-mile Super Speedway endurance race with a high-powered 4WD car (we suggest the Suzuki Escudo). Once that's done, go to the options screen and set your throttle to left on the right analog stick (see screenshot). Finally, take a rubber band and wrap it around the two analog sticks like we've done in the picture.

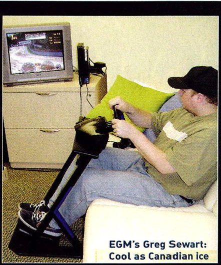
If you did this right (and who couldn't), your car should turn toward the outside wall and ride it around every lap. Now go clean your apartment, watch dirty videos or whatever else you do to kill time. Check back in about an hour and you'll have won the race.



I.LINK HUBBUB

We've had a few questions regarding the i.LINK mode in GT3. For those of you who've been getting nothing but odd looks when you ask for an i.LINK hub at your local tech store, we're here to tell you that what you're looking for is better known as a Firewire hub. Hit 'em with that info and they'll know exactly what you need.

But wait, there's more. i.LINK hubs use a six-pin configuration, while the PS2 uses a four-pin setup. So in order to link six PS2s, you need six four- to six-pin cables like the one in the picture above. Now you're ready for some head-to-head action.

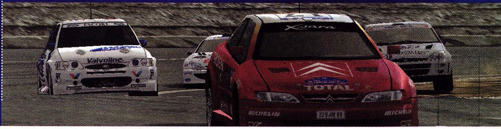


EGM's Greg Sewart: Cool as Canadian ice

Wheel Station 2

Not everyone's wife or girlfriend will let them drag the kitchen table into the living room whenever they want to use Logitech's GT Force wheel (not that the *OPM* boys would know much about wives or girlfriends). And let's be honest, you can't hook that thing to the coffee table and have any sort of success in the game. That's where Kyle Goodknight comes in. He's manufacturing and selling the Wheel Station 2 (patent pending) you see here for $50 (plus shipping and handling) through his Web site, www.CapitolDiecast.com.

The WS2 is just about perfect for sitting on your couch and playing GT3 the right way. This fairly sturdy, wooden stand has an angled dashboard where you attach the wheel itself, and a sunken, slide-proof tray for the pedals on the bottom. It's definitely a worthwhile purchase for any die-hard GT3 gamers out there.



Cat Nap: Press and Hold L2 or R2, then press X, Circle, Circle.
Catwalk: Press and Hold L2 or R2, then press Square, Triangle.
Cliffhanger: Press and Hold L2 or R2, then press Circle, Triangle.
Coffin: Press and Hold L2 or R2, then press Triangle, Circle.
Kiss Of Death: Press and Hold L2 or R2, then press Circle twice.
La-Z-Boy: Press and Hold L2 or R2, then press Circle, X.
McMetz: Press and Hold L2 or R2, then press Triangle three times.

⑤ NASCAR HEAT 2002

Unlock a legend

If you want to unlock the legendary Richard Petty, complete all of the Heat Challenges and earn at least a Bronze rating on each.

For a dose of reality

To unlock Hardcore Realism Mode, earn a 100-point rating on any track. The Hardcore Realism will only be unlocked for the track you earned the rating on.

⑥ RED FACTION

Ride the roof in multiplayer

Believe it or not, you can get up onto the roof of the Lobby (the place with the giant skylight). You'll have access to a Fusion Rocket Launcher and a Rail Driver, but just as importantly you'll have found a brilliant spot for sniping. To get up there, go to the second level of the area where you can grab the Rocket Launcher. Next, use the Rocket Launcher to aim for the corner of the wall where the skylight begins. You should be able to punch a big fat hole in the wall. Keep blasting away until you form a small alcove so you can jump on the roof. Once you're on top of the world, grab the Fusion Rocket Launcher and the Rail Driver and lie in wait.

⑦ DARK CLOUD

Take down the Dark Genie

This is a tough and time-consuming battle, but if you play your cards right, you'll be going home with a victory under your belt. Here's how to trash each of the Genie's three forms:

Form 1: After avoiding lame hand thrusts, notice on his hands what color eyes there are. Then, match your elemental attack to that. You won't be able (usually) to avoid the wind attack, but don't sweat it. Basically, watch for the color of his hands to change. If he ducks under his wings, you'll need to switch your elements accordingly.

twisted metal: BLACK™

If you're having issues with the grotesquely cool TMB, look no further than here. Next month: even more secret goodies on the best vehicular combat of the PS2 era.

MULTIPLAYER GAMING

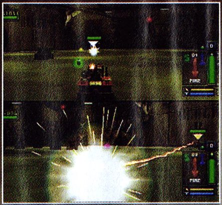
Twisted Metal: Black offers you a chance at some of the greatest multiplayer action around. Not only can you cooperate with a friend to pound the computer into oblivion, you can also try to duke it out. However, the same tricks that work on the computer will not work on a living, thinking human (we hope).

Environment Weapons: Always pay attention to the inventory of your opponent, because he/she might be saving an Environment Weapon. If you hold one of these weapons, you can effectively cut the amount of territory your opponent can go in half.

The Grabbing Game: No, we're not talking about prom, we're talking about picking up all of the decent power-ups in the level. Whenever a Health power-up spawns, grab it whether you need it or not simply to deprive your opponent.

Be Aggressive: Unlike a single-player game, it pays to be aggressive. Rip into your opponent, especially if your friend is in a lightly armored car. When your pal is hurting, hopefully there will not be any way for he or she to recover.

Invisibility: By turning invisible, you can get the drop on your human adversary, even if he or she is looking at your screen. Launch a sneak attack.



Finding Those Maniacally Destructive Environment Weapons

Zorko Bros. Scrap & Salvage

Call In the Fire Support

The Bomber in the level will fire its gun at any car that drives within its range. This attack will fire 18 potential shots, and these can whittle down almost any car with ease. When you trigger this Environment Weapon, make sure that you are not the closest car to the Bomber, or you will get pegged.

Midtwon Suburbs

Lightning Storm

If anyone is camping in the factory district, a quick jolt of lightning from the Environment Weapon of this stage will make them rethink their plans.

Note: *The computer-controlled cars will never trigger this attack, so players hiding on the rooftops are still much safer than the ones on the ground.*

Downtown Business District

Death from Above

Calypso's helicopters fly above every stage; however, in this level the ones flying over the center divide can be triggered to attack the cars closest to the bridge. This attack is exactly the same as the Bomber from the Junkyard, except that the positions of the helicopters can change.

Minion's Stadium

Zeppelin Zappin'

The Zeppelins circling the battleground aren't just for show. If you trigger the Environment Weapon, they will zap any cars underneath with arcs of lightning!

Shoot It Down

You can shoot the Zeppelins down to cause a massive explosion that rivals that of the Hindenburg.

Black Rock Ridge

Strange Clouds Brewing

Half of this level is under a strange ominous cloud. This cloud will zap any cars underneath it when you trigger the Environment Weapon. For the best effect, collect and save as many Environment Weapons as you can, then you can just fry the section of the level with the cloud. You can get lots of kills this way.

Otherwise, keep hacking and he'll transform into Form 2.

Form 2: A little bit frustrating, but that previously mentioned wind attack will be the Genie's attack of choice for now. Use up your Stamina Potions since you'll fall down, but won't take damage. Consequently, his laser attack won't be hard to avoid. Just switch to whoever has the strongest long-range attack and tear him a new one.

Form 3: A lot will be going on when you fight his third form, which makes beating him down a bit tricky. Consider using Toan with the Holy Element. The priority is to go after the boss while his head is down and his mouth is open. Make sure you don't try to target; it will usually target one of the skeletons wandering around. Which is all bad. And the crystal in his mouth is huge. So if you keep missing, you probably cheated to get this far. So, run up, hit his mouth. Right away he'll stomp a foot and energy waves will try to ruin you. Just run in a big circle so that you end up back at his mouth. Hit him again, and run in a circle. Again, circle. He'll be a goner in no time. Now, if you miss (which you wouldn't dare, right?), you'll have to avoid a laser attack. It can be devastating so don't get hit. Just run, run, run.

❽ ATV OFFROAD FURY

Tracks and rides galore

To unlock all rides, enter your name as CHACHING once you begin Pro Career Mode. After that, all ATVs are yours to enjoy.

To access all tracks, enter the name WHA-TEXIT after selecting Pro-Career mode. The game will take you back to the main menu and you can enter your rider name.

❾ TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Bowling for doctors

Knockout Dr. B

In Tekken Bowl, if you aim at Dr. B. in the background you can hit him and get a K.O.

Fight As Angel

Beat the Arcade Mode until Devil becomes unlocked. At the character select screen, highlight his screen and press Start.

Fight As Tiger

At the character select screen, highlight Eddy's screen and press Start.

❿ MIDNIGHT CLUB

Imports 'r' us

With Smuggler's Run data on your memory card, go into Arcade mode in Midnight Club. In your selection of cars you will be able to select the Dune Buggy. Happy days.

Endurance Secrets

Can You Survive?

There are several secrets in this game that you can only unlock in the Endurance mode. This mode of play pits you against a series of cars without the aid of the Repair Stations. If you find yourself running low on health, sometimes the Mercy Killings are your only chance to recover.

Find a Place To Hide: Almost every level has a section where you can hide out from the enemy until the Health power-ups spawn. Find a section where you have a clear line of fire to Freeze the enemy before lighting it up with everything you've got. If you play a game of attrition, you'll never earn the secret levels. A smart player knows when to break away from combat. When you exhaust your Special power and weapons, get the heck out of Dodge.

CHOOSE A LEVEL
UNLOCK WITH 10 ENDURANCE KILLS IN 'SNOWY ROADS' LEVEL
FREEWAY

Unlock Prison Ship

Open up this Challenge level with 15 kills on the Junkyard level.

Unlock Freeway

Open up this Challenge level with 10 kills on the Snowy Roads level.

Mini Suburbs

Open up this Challenge level with 10 kills on the Drive-In Movie level.

MINION

PLAYER 1
Minion

The Beginning or the End?

Earn MInion by beating the game with all the other cars. Minion is a powerhouse with a strange way of speaking (purely in numbers). One of our more manic Twisted Metal fans was the first to crack Minion's code. Here's how:

The Minion Code

Each number corresponds to a letter of the alphabet. For example, the number 1 would be A, and 2 would be B. What makes this tricky is that you must guess which numbers are paired. For example, 12 could be L, or it could be A and B. Each time Minion speaks, he reveals more. What is the secret of Marcus Kane?

Code After the First Level

9 4 15 14 15 20
I Do Not
20 8 9 14 11
Think
20 8 9 19
This
9 19 18 5 1 12
Is Real...

ENERGY MOVES

Freeze Missile

Damage: 1

Up, Down, Up, Up

Use this attack to Freeze an opponent to open him/her up to your nastiest attacks.

Mine

Damage: 10

Left, Right, Down

More often than not, when you trigger a mine, it will be by accident. Mines can thwart rival cars from chasing after you.

Charge-Up Mine

Damage: 20

Left, Right ,Down (hold), Down

This is a more damaging version of a mine. If you have time to pull it off, this weapon makes an excellent trap for the enemy.

Jump

R1 + L1

This useful maneuver can help you throw off pursuit, as well as help you reach hard-to-get-to areas of the levels.

Shield

Right, Right, Down

Protect yourself with the shield before wading into the thick of combat. It drains a lot of energy, but it's worth it.

Invisibility

Left, Left, Down, Down

Want to give your enemies a nice surprise? Turn invisible before you attack with your strongest weapons!

Rear Attack

Left, Right, Down + L2

You can fire off one of your weapons behind your car to pick off annoying tailgaters!

TRICKS FROM THE 10 BEST-SELLING PS ONE GAMES

❶ FINAL FANTASY CHRONICLES

Find the Secret Developer's Room: It's true, it's true. There is a hidden Developer's Room in FFIV. Here's how to get it: Go directly to the Dwarven Castle in the underworld. Do not pass go, do not collect $200. Get to the room where you can buy weapons and armor and you'll be able to find a path in between the counters. Walk up into the Rally-ho Pub. There, walk directly to the right (around the table) and you'll see an odd blackish section of floor. Walk through the wall at that point, continue right and down the steps into the Developer's Room.

There is also a hidden porn magazine in the room as well. Get into the Nap Room (from the entrance to the room, go up and right, then down into the Nap Room). Check out the left side of the bookcase nearby to find the magazine. Select it on the Item menu and the screen will turn purplish as Cecil looks at it. After he's done, the screen goes back to normal and the smut is gone.

Duplicate FFIV weapons: Get yourself into battle first. Have the person with the weapon you want select the Item command. Select a blank space in the item list, then scroll up and select the weapon you want duplicated. Then, exit the item list and run away. Go to the menu screen and equip the item you wanted duplicated. It should say you have two of that weapon. Unequip, then equip the weapon and you'll have two!

DVD EGGS

A Nightmare on Elm Street Box Set DVD

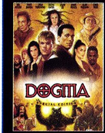
In the mood to see the hidden alternate ending? Sure you are. Here's how: Go through the Labyrinth to reach a locked fire door in the Nightmare Encyclopedia game. Enter "20" to activate the proper shapes and unlock the door. This will unlock the second alternate ending to the movie.

Rocky 25th Anniversary Special Edition DVD

Everyone can spice up their lives by watching Rocky now and again. Here's a sweet treat for those who have the anniversary DVD. At the main menu, press Up to highlight the word "Rocky." Press Enter to view a hidden sequence titled "Rocky Meets Stallone," in which Sly Stallone meets himself in the part of Rocky Balboa.

The Mexican DVD

Julia Roberts really is America's sweetheart. Brad Pitt? Not so much. Here's an egg that'll keep you locked in to a sub-par flick featuring both of them. At the main menu, select the "Special Features" option. Then, select "Cast" and choose Brad Pitt. Press Right on the first screen of his information to highlight a box. Press Enter to view a scene that was cut from the movie.



Dogma Special Edition DVD

There are quite a few hidden things on the Dogma Special Edition DVD (are you really surprised?). Here are a few to give a new kick to your dusted-over DVD.

1. Hidden Messages: Insert Disc 1, then highlight the "Play Movie" option at the main menu. Press Left to display a "Don't Play Movie" option. Highlight that option, hit Enter to display one of three hidden messages. The other messages can be viewed by entering that screen again.

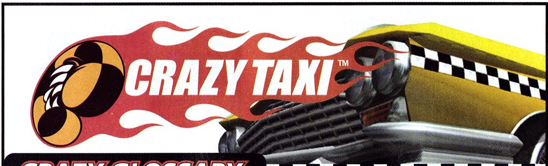
2. Hidden Features: Insert Disc 1, then highlight the option next to the "View Askew" clown logo. Press Left to access the "Jay and Silent Bob's Secret Stash" option.

3. Hidden Clips: Insert Disc 1, then select the "Scene Selections" option at the main menu. Advance to the last screen of the scene selections and press 3, wait briefly, then press 3 again.

Insert Disc 2, then select the "Deleted Scenes" option at the main menu. Advance to the last screen of the deleted scenes and press 2, wait briefly, then press 3 again.

4. The Demon Screen: Select any option that causes the demon to appear and faint. Select that same option again immediately.

Have your own DVD Eggs? Whip them our way by e-mailing: opm@ziffdavis.com and title the e-mail "DVD Eggs." If we use it, we'll make you famous by putting your name in our mag.



CRAZY GLOSSARY

Throughout the Crazy Taxi experience, you'll likely come across the following terms more than a few times. The "Advice" option in Crazy Box can be particularly confusing if you're not totally familiar with the game terms. If you find yourself scratching your head at some of the game hints, simply refer to this glossary of terms.

CRAZY DASH Probably the most important skill to master in Crazy Taxi, the Crazy Dash will rocket you from a standing start to top speed in no time flat. Doing the Crazy Dash is simple enough: Mash the Accelerator and the Drive Gear button at the same time. On top of its obvious benefits, the Crazy Dash is a great way to bring your cab back under control if you find yourself in a wild spin or if you can't get any traction on a certain area of land.

CRAZY STOP Being able to stop with precision is a must in Crazy Taxi. The Crazy Stop is done exactly like the Crazy Dash, except it uses the Brake and Reverse buttons. The sooner you do a Crazy Stop after successfully executing a Crazy Dash, the quicker you'll come to a full stop. Either way, it's much more effective than simply hitting your brakes.

CRAZY DRIFT Need to get your cab turned around in a hurry? The Crazy Drift is your friend. While driving at top speed, yank the wheel hard in either direction. Shift into reverse and slam it back into drive immediately—and don't let off the accelerator even for an instant. Get out of the slide with a Crazy Dash.

CRAZY DRIFT JUMP Any time you're about to go airborne (approaching a ramp, etc.) and know you need to be facing another direction when you hit the ground, you need to perform a Crazy Drift Jump. Just before you launch, perform a Crazy Drift and turn the wheel in the direction you want to be facing when you land. Couple this move with a Crazy Dash when you land and you'll be set.

CRAZY THROUGH
Passing by other cars, either parked or moving, at close range while at top speed is the way to do a Crazy Through. Doing multiple Throughs without touching another vehicle is a good way to build up your Max Combo meter, subsequently raising your tip amount exponentially with each new Crazy Through or Crazy Drift.

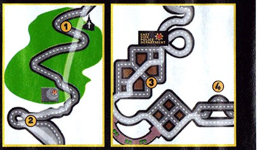
CRAZY DRIFT STOP
When dropping off a customer, sometimes it's necessary to turn around quickly, especially if the next fare you want is behind you. In this case, do a Crazy Drift and immediately execute a Crazy Stop the moment you're facing the direction you want. Voilà! A Crazy Drift Stop! It's tough to master, but worth every bit of practice.

CRAZY TIPS

The very first thing any rookie cabbie should do when he or she turns on Crazy Taxi is go to the options screen and turn the Traffic down to Easy. More traffic technically means more chances at a Crazy Through and a higher tip total, but it also means far more collisions and frustration.

The only other useful piece of advice is to concentrate on cleaning each section of the Arcade and Original maps out of red and orange customers. Once that's done, grab a green or yellow fare and move to a new section of the map. It's true that the red and orange fares are lower, but the time bonus you get for an almost assured "Speedy" rating is what will ultimately get you the $20,000+ score and the coveted "Crazy" rating.

S-S CRAZY ATTACK



This final Crazy Box challenge is by far the most difficult, requiring you to make one circuit around the Arcade course in four minutes. Here are a few tips to help shave precious seconds off your time.

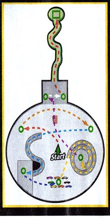
1. Cut across the grass as close to the church as possible. This will put you on the proper line for a quick exit at the Heliport.

2. Just before the hairpin curve at the R.B. Station, do a Crazy Drift to the left and make a 180-degree turn. You should go airborne and land in a parking lot. Stick near the wall and then swerve into the Stadium promenade to avoid heavy traffic.

3. Notice how much shorter it is to take the center line through downtown after the Police Station? Crazy Drifts will help you through all those turns.

4. The shortest distance between two points is a straight line, so don't head underground. Use the sidewalk to avoid the heavy traffic through here.

S-3 CRAZY PARTY



Though not as tough as S-S, the Crazy Party can be challenging without the proper route, so follow this handy diagram. When possible, use the obstacles surrounding the fares to slow your speed as you do a Crazy Stop. Keep in mind, though, that aiming straight for any of the customers when you stop will cause them to jump out of the way and cost you precious seconds. After coming off the spiral column (yellow), be sure to do a Crazy Dash to get up enough speed to make the jump off the ramp.

② GRAN TURISMO 2

Bypass those fancy license exams: Load a memory card containing Gran Turismo license data. Gran Turismo licenses (B Class, A Class and International-A) will fulfill similarly named license requirements in Gran Turismo 2.

Bonus cars in Simulation Mode: Unlike the original (where rewards were straightforward), bonus cars in Gran Turismo 2's Simulation mode are more numerous and subjective. Here's how the sim-mode bonuses are determined:

1. The type of car (and the class it is in).
2. The number of consecutive wins that car has achieved prior to a given race.
3. The course on which the race occurs.

Most of the time, bonuses vary by one class. Thus, a Class-B victory is likely to be awarded with a Class-C, Class-B or Class-A bonus car.

At the car wash: There's a mistake when you wash your car. It says it'll cost you 5K credits, but it's only 50. Nice.

③ FROGGER

Infinite frogs and level select: To open up all the levels, pause while playing and press Right, Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, R1, L1, R1, L1 and Circle. To make it even easier, also press Right, Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle and X for unlimited lives.

④ SPEC OPS: RANGER ELITE

Many, many codes for a bad game

To initiate these codes, pause, hold all four shoulder buttons and while holding them, dial in these cheats. Good fun.

Invincibility: X, Triangle, Square, Circle
All Worlds and Levels: Triangle, Circle, Square, Square
Level Skip: Circle, Square, X, X
Unlimited Ammo: Circle, Square, Triangle, X
Refill Team Health: Triangle, Triangle, X, X
Refill Team Ammo: X, X, Triangle, Triangle
First Special Weapon: Triangle, X, X, X
Second Special Weapon: X, X, X, Triangle

⑥ ATV QUAD POWER RACING

Fender Bender

Not a trick, really, but if you knock off the fenders of your ride along the way, notice how they magically reappear when the race is over. Why? The game is horsecrap.

⑦ NBA LIVE 2001

Being an ass in one-on-one

Sure you can just pass the ball to your opponent by hitting X, but why not give a little street 'tude with your game?

RESIDENT EVIL -CODE:Veronica- X

As the longest (and best) Resident Evil game, Code: Veronica X is not without its tricky situations. We've highlighted a few of the most puzzling.

① DUPLICATING THE HAWK EMBLEM

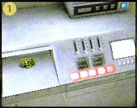
The metal detector makes it tricky to progress early in the game. You know that you need to use the Hawk Emblem you found in the computer room in order to open the huge door that indicates a need for it—but it's metal, so you can't get it that far. Instead, you must place the item into the Duplicator found in the room at the far end of the metal-detecting hallway, combining it with the TG-01 alloy to form an Emblem Replica. Don't have the TG-01? Then use the Extinguisher from the garage on the fire in the cemetery to gain access to the Briefcase. Examine the Briefcase and you'll find the alloy. Now you're set.

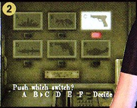
② SAVE STEVE

Steve has taken the Lugers and is trapped. The clue here indicates that you select two things that are similar. Like two types of guns, perhaps?

③ PICTURE PUZZLE

This genealogy puzzle is perhaps the most difficult and confusing in the game. Hit the buttons in this order: Lady Ashford, man with two kids, man with teacup, red-headed man, old man, the man next to Lady Ashford and, finally, the main picture up top.



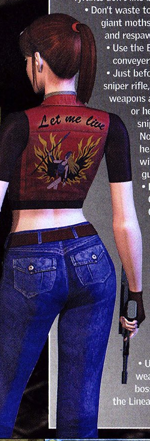


④ THE SWORD IN THE STATUE

In order to attain the Piano Roll in the lower level of the Private Residence, you must first slip the Rusted Sword found there into the sarcophagus. One problem, though: Once you pick it up from the statue, gas starts to leak. Stop the gas by pushing the statue around in a counterclockwise direction.

⑤ FILL 'ER UP

Try to figure this puzzle out for yourself, as it's arguably the most intelligent one in the game. But if you can't, do this: Hit 3 twice, then 5 once.

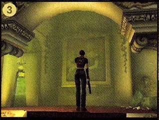


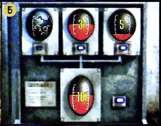
OTHER QUICK TIPS

- Give the Hemostatic Medicine to Rodrigo when you find it.
- Use the second Blue Shield Crest near the guillotine.
- Use the Army, Navy and Air Force Proofs to activate the lift to the plane.
- Tyrants don't like being hit with crates.
- Don't waste too much ammo on the giant moths. They're hard to shoot and respawn.
- Use the Bar Code Sticker on a conveyer-belt box.
- Just before you pick up Alfred's sniper rifle, leave some good weapons and medicine for Chris, or he's screwed. Make every sniper shot count against Nosferatu (aim for the heart); then finish him off with your knife or handgun.
- Kill the worm with Chris if you want Claire's Lighter back. It's mighty useful!
- Don't fight the axe-wielding Green Mutant. Just run and use two extra-potent health items. (You'll know when to!)
- Whether or not the power is on helps you attain the Red and Blue Tiger Eyes.
- Use your most powerful weapons against the final boss, and finish it off with the Linear Launcher.

GENERAL HINTS

- Conserve high-power weapons for stronger enemies.
- Don't overwrite every save—just in case.
- Avoid bats by using your lighter or by walking instead of running.
- Pay close attention to documents for clues to puzzles and more.
- Check items frequently for information and other items.





Here's how:

Strong pass: Press L2 + X in one-on-one mode to pass the ball quickly to your opponent.

Between the legs pass: Press R2 + X in one-on-one mode to pass the ball between your legs to your opponent.

Rolling pass: Press R1 + X in one-on-one mode to pass the ball by rolling it to your opponent.

Scoring an easy hoop in one-on-one

When your opponent checks the ball to you, fake the shot and he will jump. Run around him and dunk the ball for an easy bucket.

⑧ TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

Skullduggery

Here's where you'll find the Gold Skulls in the Training Level. Ready, set, skull!

1. At the beginning toward the left.
2. It can be found in the shallow water below the first jump you have to do.
3. Below the "running jump" section of training.
4. Can be found in the water of your swim training session.
5. Found during the outdoor sequence where the old man fights two of the wild boars. It's around to the right, deep into a right-hand corner.
6. Look for it on the floor on the right side of the room where the spikes are near the exit door just before Lara goes out to learn to crawl through the crawlspace.
7. In the crawlspace.
8. The last of them is on the elevated walkway off to the right where Lara follows the old man up the ramp. It's just before he makes the speech about going left or right. If you go to the left, you'll have a few more problems than going right.

⑩ TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

Let there be coin!

Instant $5,000: During the game press Start to pause. Then hold L1 while you enter: X, Down, Left, Right, Down, Left, Right. If entered correctly the screen will shimmy.

Mirror Mode: Pause the game, hold L1 and enter this for all the arenas to be reversed. You'd think it's no big deal, but it's like a whole new skateboarding world. Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, X, Square, Circle, Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, X, Square, Circle. Again, if you didn't make a mess of the code, the screen will shake.

STRATEGY GUIDES

If you're in need of help, and looking to buy a strategy guide from your local gaming hub, make sure you get the right one. Here are a few from the hottest games going.

Gran Turismo 3: A-spec

Though this book doesn't quite live up to the "Perfect" billing, it certainly is mind-bogglingly exhaustive. The "Lineup" section features profiles of every manufacturer, with detailed history and specs for one selected car each, and the "Strategy" section includes maps of all the tracks with pointers for specific tough spots. That's all nice, and certainly impressive, but none of this is really vital to succeeding in the game. Fortunately, the guide also includes a checklist of every vehicle, a priceless listing of which vehicles are awarded for which race, step-by-step advice for earning Gold rankings in the License tests, and a guide to proper tuning of your car—which, it must be said, might prove too technical (and somewhat vague) for the layman. Still, it's a fine resource.

Final Score ●●●●

www.versusbooks.com

PRIMA'S OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE
twisted metal: black

Twisted Metal: Black

While aping TM:B's graphical style is a cute touch, in places it makes reading this book while actually playing something of a challenge, especially with the super-wide columns that are tough to follow. Some of the advice is pretty redundant, "Keep an eye on your radar!" (well, duh) but the maps that take up the majority of the book are helpful for finding out where those oh-so-important power-ups are located (although their graphical style is a bit muddy in places). It also does a good job of revealing the hidden vehicles with map locations and landmark references which make it much easier to genuinely "cheat" your way through the game.

Final Score ●●●●

www.primagames.com

Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare

This is a strange case, indeed. It seems that the guide for Alone in the Dark might just be better than the game itself. Where the game sometimes leaves you feeling like there are more characters than the 8 percent your brain can comprehend, the guide carefully details who's who, and adds a layer that the game tried so hard to achieve. Besides the character bios, the guide brilliantly moves the reader step by step through the game. There are even maps to go along so you don't get lost. Which is nice, especially since the game features *so many* impossible-to-open doors. There's even a monster list, along with what weapon is best for destroying them. Overall, this guide would make a nice gift-wrapped gift to someone who loves AitD: TNN. Or to a gamer who's stuck.

Final Score ●●●●●

www.primagames.com

NBA STREET

NBA Street is blowing off store shelves, and we wanted to serve up the tips so you could keep embarrassing your loud-mouth roommate. This month's Street lessons: blocking, scoring big and nailing the big Gamebreaker shot.

TURBO
6 4
TURBO
48500
breaking you off
62750
3 wins

Shot-Block Fever

Shot-blocking is essential if you plan on putting your opponent to shame. But there are ways to be a dominating shot-blocker and one who just puts palm to ball on occasion. Here are our suggestions to taking a game with defense:

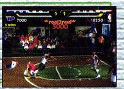
First, not everyone can shot-block. If you want to completely change the opponent's offensive philosophy, you're going to need a seven-footer. Shaq, Mutombo and Alonzo Mourning are three of the best big men. Also, a guy with Shaq's size can keep bodies out of the paint, too.

Second, when the offensive team is dribbling around the perimeter looking for an open shot, take control of your big man and keep him outside of the lane. Once the shot clock is low or when they shake their defender, be ready to hold turbo and tap Triangle for an uber-jump. You'll catch the ball on the way up, many times.

Alternately, if their team gets into the paint, back in and get near the hoop. But make sure you don't stand under the basket. If you do, your jump will be tempered by the rim and stuffing someone will be nearly impossible.

Another key to defense in general is to beware of a special move. If you see one coming, back away for the slightest second to avoid getting thrown down, and then advance like a starved wolf to alter the shot.

Scoring the Big 750K In Rucker Park



If you're planning on making a run at the Trick Point records in Hold the Court, there are a couple steps to take that will assure you get the points and the win. Rucker Park demands you score 750,000 points. And we know just the tricks.

Step #1: Pick a team with a big-time shot blocker and a big-time ball-handler (Lakers, Sixers, Mavs, Heat, Spurs, Kings).

Step #2: Commit to the dribble.

Step #3: Dunk early and often. If you shoot the two, you might as well take out a rifle and blow off half your foot. Well, that's overdoing it, but the point is to be patient. Block shots, combo into dunks, and you'll score big points consistently.

Step #4: Go for a dunk with your Gamebreaker. It may only be worth one point, but what's your hurry? Also, the bigger bonus is that a dunk is worth 50K on your trick meter while a two-pointer is only worth 25K. Only if you're losing would you even consider the two.

Don't Get Your Gamebreaker Blocked

You work so hard to get a Gamebreaker. If it gets blocked you'll end up completely demoralized. Here's a trick:

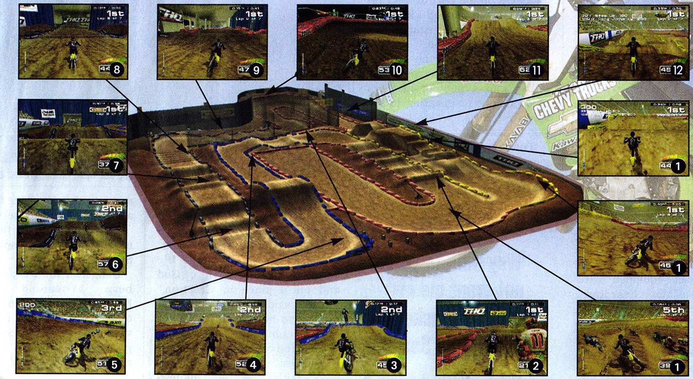
When you've got your Gamebreaker meter full and the ball's in the hands of your best shooter, you'll get blanketed by defenders. The trick is to pump fake, get the defense in the air, then pop your shot while holding two turbo buttons. Another trick is to pass to your best shooter, while in shooting position, then pump fake, then move a step or two right or left, then pop the shot. It works like a charm.

TURBO
GAMEBREAKER
5 4
TURBO
1P
86250
downshift
35000

MX2002 featuring Ricky Carmichael™

So, you've proven your dirt-biking prowess well enough to qualify for the final race in MX 2002. But do you have what it takes to finish first and win it all? Here's a step-by-step guide on how to make yourself a champion.

1) As the race starts, don't be too concerned with the hole shot—you're better off moving slowly through the tight turns in this ever-so-short first lap. The closer you lurk up front to start, the more likely you are to get knocked off of your bike. 2) You don't even need to jump (R2 or L2) through the first series of hills. Take it easy. 3) When you start seeing the blue sideguards after about 15 seconds, that's your sign to start revving it up. Jump the first hill in this area as far as you can, and don't forget to angle your bike to the left as you land, then hit L1 for a quick boost. 4) In this straightaway, stay to the middle or left, then take a mighty jump from the upcoming hill to start lap 2. 5) After you've crossed the line and landed, stay to the left-hand side not too far from the wall. It's easier to make the sharp right turn.



COMPLICATED SEQUENCE! 6) You might be tempted to jump the gap in front of you. Don't. Just let your momentum carry you over, then be sure to get a full leap for the hill in front of you. If done right (and you very well might screw up from time to time), you'll land on just the other side of the next hill. 7) Immediately prepare for another full-powered jump and leap the hill ahead. You'll land in front of a series of smaller hills. 8) Jump off the first one with full power and you're set. Remember the right turn ahead, though!

9) Leap over the first hill, then turn left. 10) Stay to the left-hand side of the track after the turn; it makes the sharp right-hand turn ahead easier.

COMPLICATED SEQUENCE! 11) You've got a choice of two hills ahead of you now; take the left one. Leap it at full power, but 12) don't leap off the top area—just boost with L1 and let your momentum carry you below, then 13) perform a mighty leap over the next immediate hill.

14) CRITICAL TURN! This turn can make or break your momentum toward the finish line. Your best bet is to stay near to the left about where the dirt begins to go uphill as you begin moving right. Turn fully at just the right moment (around 10 yellow sideguards before they turn red), and you won't crash into the left wall. You'll also have the necessary momentum to leap from the first hill over the next one with a full-powered jump. Do it again immediately, turn left, and continue with step 3 for the remaining laps. Good luck!

OPM TAKES A BITE OF... the ONION®

The Onion, "America's Finest News Source," has been proving with each issue that it's aptly named. Rarely is it read cover to cover without making its onlooker cry from laughing so hard

Video-Game Character Wondering Why Heartless God Always Chooses 'Continue'

ORANGEBURG, SC—Solid Snake, tactical-espionage expert and star of PlayStation's "Metal Gear Solid," questioned the nature of the universe Monday when, moments after his 11th death in two hours, a cruel God forced him to "Continue" his earthly toil and suffering.

"Is this all there is?" asked Snake, hiding in a storage locker while two masked guards searched for him in the hold of a cargo ship. "Is this why I was created? To suffer? Will I ever escape this endless loop of grueling labor followed by violent death?"

Snake was then discovered by the guards and cut down in a hail of gunfire.

Snake, who has been fatally shot 2,143 times in the past six months, said he does not know why God deems it necessary for him to endlessly repeat his mission, which involves sneaking aboard a hijacked military ship and discovering who stole the walking nuclear-equipped battle tank known as Metal Gear Ray.

"Why will the Lord not grant me my final rest?" asked a reincarnated Snake, crawling underneath a lifeboat on the ship's weather deck. "Certainly there must be a greater purpose for me than to kill dozens and eventually be killed myself."

Added Snake: "As Goethe said, 'Man must strive, and in striving he must err.'"

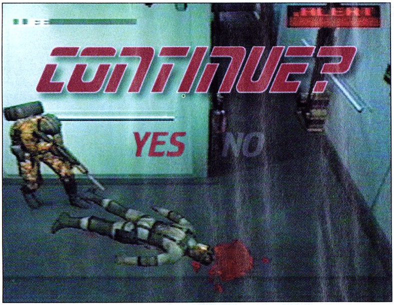
Pitching himself over the ship's railing to avoid a trio of patrol guards, Snake pondered the notion of self-determination, wondering aloud whether he had any control over his own destiny. Before he could draw any conclusions, however, he lost his grip, falling into the sea and drowning.

"The Koran asks, 'Shall not the Lord of all the Earth do right?'" said Snake, rematerializing under the lifeboat. "But scholars have often argued whether the question is an assertion of belief or a refutation of faith in absolute goodness on the part of the Creator. As for myself, all I know is, I'm tired of the constant pain, death, and destruction."

Snake was then shot in the head by an undetected guard, falling into a pool of his own blood before reappearing in the ship's afterdeck, where his mission began.

"I often wonder, as many video-game characters do, whether God forces me to Continue to punish me for my sins," Snake said. "After all, I've deserted the American military, killed hundreds of guards, and betrayed my would-be lover, Meryl Silverburgh, by submitting to torture in the alternate ending to the first installment of 'Metal Gear Solid.' But sometimes, like when I suicidally attack dozens of armed guards with only my bare hands, it seems that God is putting me through hell merely to amuse Himself. It just doesn't make sense."

"Why will the Lord not grant me my final rest?" asked a reincarnated Snake.



Above: Solid Snake lies dead on the ground once again.

According to Rev. Paul Flessing of Yale University's Divinity School, Snake's theosophical quandary is far from uncommon.

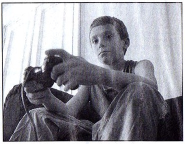
"We all wrestle with the Big Questions about the will of God and one's place in Creation," Flessing said. "But the important thing is to have faith and try to find meaning in one's life—or lives, as the case may be. We must remember the trials of Job, whose faith God continually tested. It seems Snake is going through something very much like that, with this constant pattern of 'Continues.' The purpose will become clear to him in the end."

Sidling along a companionway toward the ship's lounge, Snake considered his ultimate fate.

"What awaits me at the end of my lives' journeys?" Snake asked. "Is there a Paradise on the other side? Or will it all end in a full-motion video sequence that hints at a forthcoming sequel?"

The hallway then filled with nerve gas, fatally asphyxiating Snake.

God, also known as Orangeburg 11-year-old Brandon MacElwee, offered no comment on His greater plan for Snake, saying He was "too busy trying to get to the part with the knife-throwing Russian girl."



Above: God, moments before determining Solid Snake's fate.

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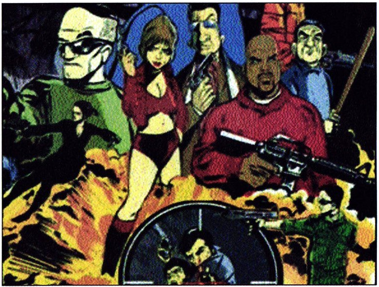

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This month *EGM* risks life and limb in order to infiltrate Outer Heaven and become the only magazine granted an interview with Hideo Kojima between now and the release of Metal Gear Solid 2. We pick the creator's brain apart using various forms of torture and truth serums to get answers to your most burning questions. Also, we take an early look at not one, but two new Legacy of Kain titles. Blood Omen 2 and Soul Reaver 2 will bring you more blood-drinkin', soul-suckin' action than ever before. Life is good.

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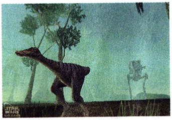

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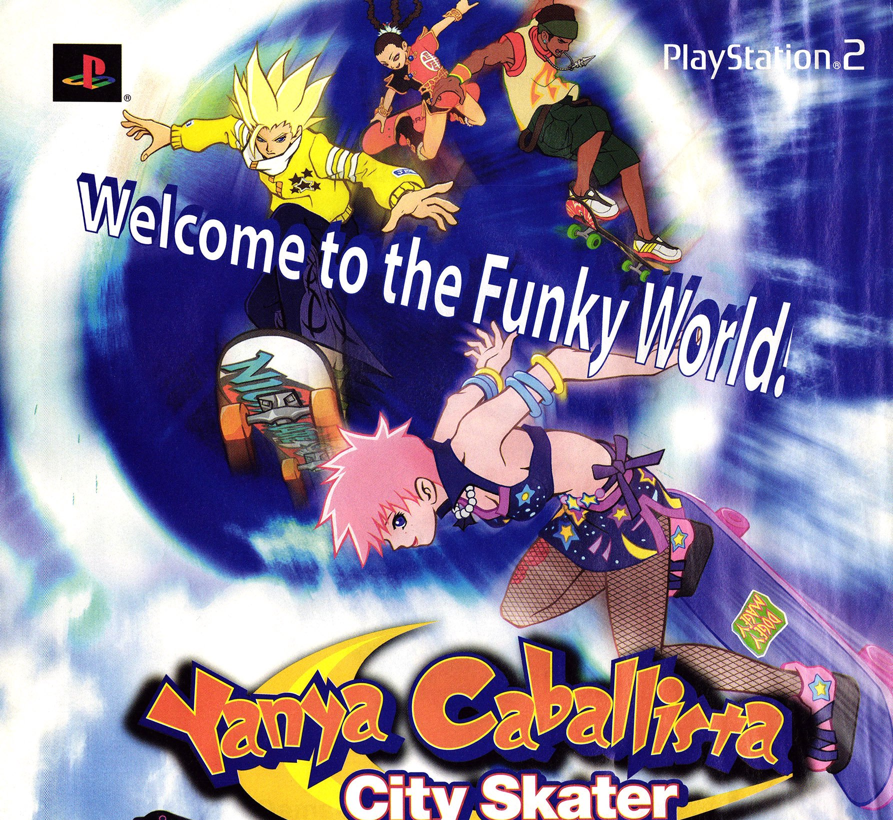
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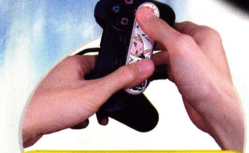
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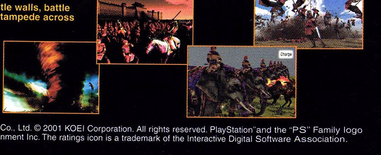

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